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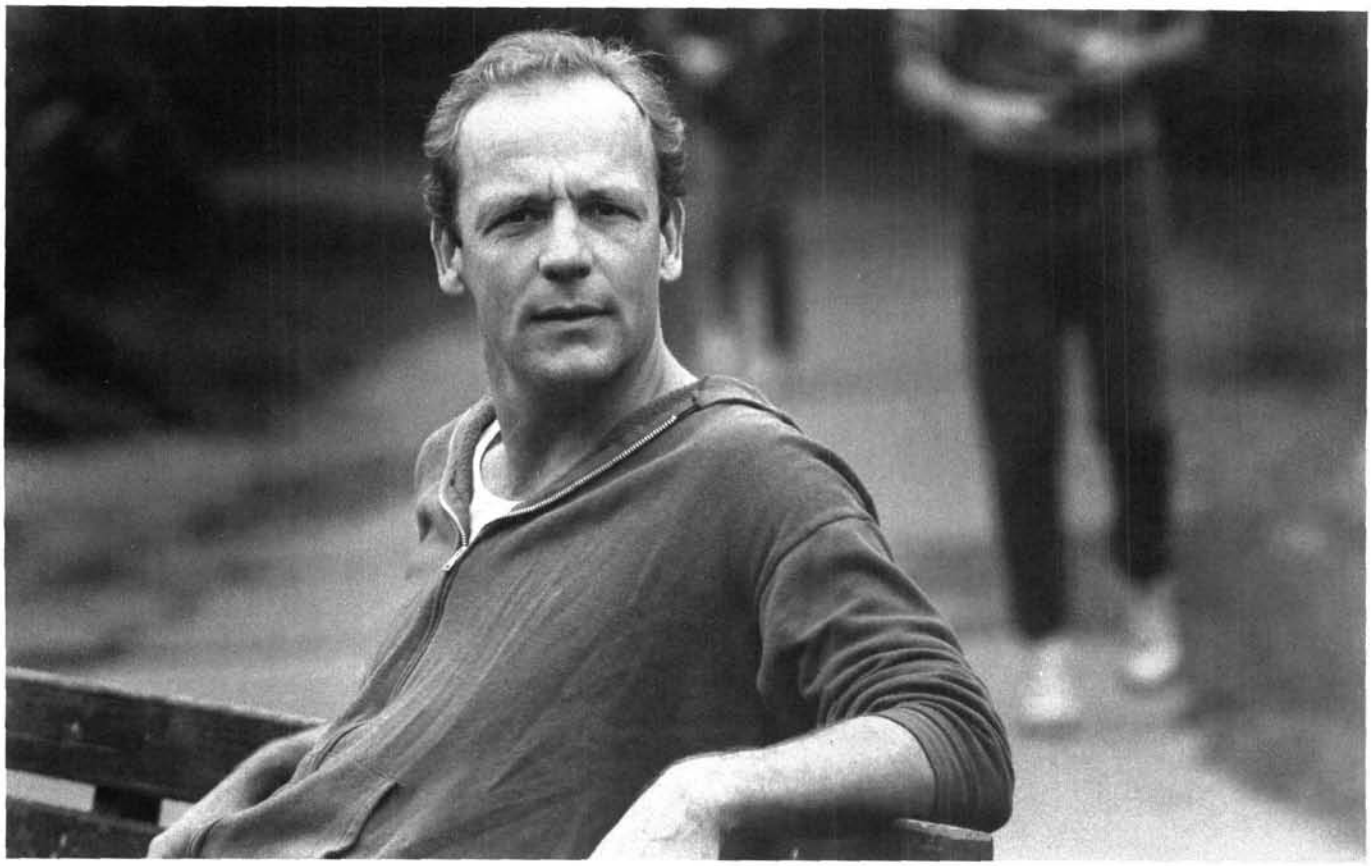

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FROM WASHINGTON

RUNNING OUT OF OFFICE

What kind of crazy political system is it where a man who wants to run for president must begin by withdrawing from public life? It's become an American tradition, dating perhaps back to Richard Nixon in 1962. Gary Hart followed the pattern when he "declared his 'interest' in the presidency" (as the *Washington Post* chastely put it) by announcing that he won't run for reelection to the Senate this year. Good luck to Hart. I voted for him once before, and wouldn't mind voting for him again. But really. Is this necessary?

Under present circumstances, the answer is probably yes. For one thing, running for president is now a job in itself. Nixon and Ronald Reagan spent six years each at it, more or less full time. Jimmy Carter spent two. Walter Mondale, for all the good it did him, spent four. With only 34 months to go until Election 1988, Hart is none too early by these standards.

But there's more to it than that. The way the press covers politics these days puts an enormous premium on not making mistakes, or "gaffes." The implicit scoring system is almost entirely negative. The campaign is treated like an obstacle course in which you lose points for doing something wrong. You rarely get awarded points for doing anything right. Under these rules, you're better off doing as little as possible. If you're not being tested, you can't be found wanting. That is why Hart is desperately eager not to be perceived as the front-runner.

Actually holding office, though, is even worse than being the front-runner. Total self-reinvention is essential to any serious modern presidential campaign. Cadres of consultants, pollsters, and media advisers stand ready to help. Nothing distracts from this painstaking process like having to take a position on an issue not of your own choosing. A public official can't design his own agenda. He is a prisoner of reality, who must vote yea or nay on hundreds of policy questions, any one of which might come back to haunt him.

The issues a practicing senator faces are infuriatingly concrete. Often a legislator is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. He can offend yuppies or he can offend Catholics, appear to be soft on defense or appear to be a spendthrift, lose the farmers or lose the unions. Voting issues resist the delicate molding process that allows a mere producer of position papers to strike that perfect balance.

If Hart had run again for the Senate, his very presidential ambition would have become an anguishing either/or. If he admitted to it, he'd be accused of exploiting Coloradans. If he denied it, he'd be accused of lying. Journalists enjoy turning each of these screws. We would love to torture the non-office-holding candidate as well, but the occasions don't arrive in such profusion.

Being out of office greatly facilitates the striking of useful postures. It may be too late for Gary Hart to be born in a log cabin, but it is not too late for him to buy one and move in. I do worry about the sense of humor of a man who, with a straight face, can run for president as the kind of guy who lives on "Troublesome Gulch Road." But I can see that it wouldn't be easy to find an equivalent Marlboro Man setting for press interviews within commuting distance of Washington. Not that you'd want to. The point is that you're not a creature of Washington, a pretense that's hard to maintain if you live and work here. As political real estate, Hart's log cabin puts poor Mondale's hastily purchased home in suburban Minneapolis to shame.

Mondale made a big deal about using his time out of office to read up and think about America's problems. It seems that Hart is sparing us that one. On the other hand, he's breaking new ground in the "I'm not really a politician" school of political campaigning. Escorting a *Wall Street Journal* reporter around Troublesome Gulch in the snow, "he talks about living here among the gray fox and the pines, writing novels," and says, "I've always looked at politics as an interim period in my life." A friend of Hart is quoted as saying he sometimes even talks about moving to Ireland. Surely this carries the anti-Washington theme too far. Americans have a peculiar fondness for diffidence in their politicians, but will they really elect someone as president who would just as soon leave the country?

Then there's the financial problem. Because of the terrible cost of running for president, Hart still owes $3.4 million from his 1984 campaign. He's got to pay this off before he can start raising money for 1988. Not running for the Senate gives him time, and also saves him from having to raise millions for that race too. We've almost reached the point where running for president is a once-in-a-lifetime gamble. Anyone who loses—at least without winning the nomination—will be too saddled with debt to think about running again.

A colleague asks resentfully why Hart should be buying colorful real estate when he owes other people so much money. The answer is one of the many anomalies in our campaign finance laws. Not only is Hart not personally liable for these debts—he is *forbidden* to pay them off himself. Having accepted federal matching funds, he is severely limited in how much of his own money he can put into his campaign, even when it's over. What's more, he can't take contributions of more than $1,000 and can't take any money at all from people who already gave that much ("maxed out," in the argot) when the campaign was still going on. Thus his most loyal supporters are out-of-bounds. So are PACs, by Hart's own principled stand. He's in a bind.

For all these reasons, Hart is better off in Troublesome Gulch than on Capitol Hill. There is a counterexample: Howard Baker, who seems to have fallen off the edge of the earth since he left the Senate to concentrate on running for president. Baker may be the Henry Jackson of 1988, a man who discovers too late that you can be a respected national statesman in Washington without having any special appeal in the rest of the country.

In general, though, the further you are from the action, the better. Our political process rewards the flight from political responsibility. Campaigning and governing have almost become mutually exclusive activities. Apart from actual incumbency, only one office is arguably a better jumping-off place for a race for president than no office at all. That's vice president: an exception that proves the rule.

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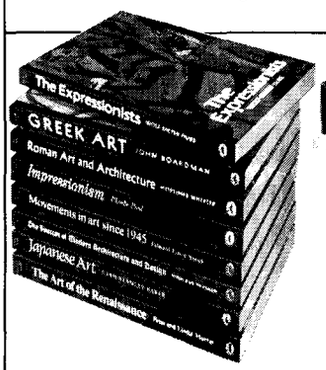

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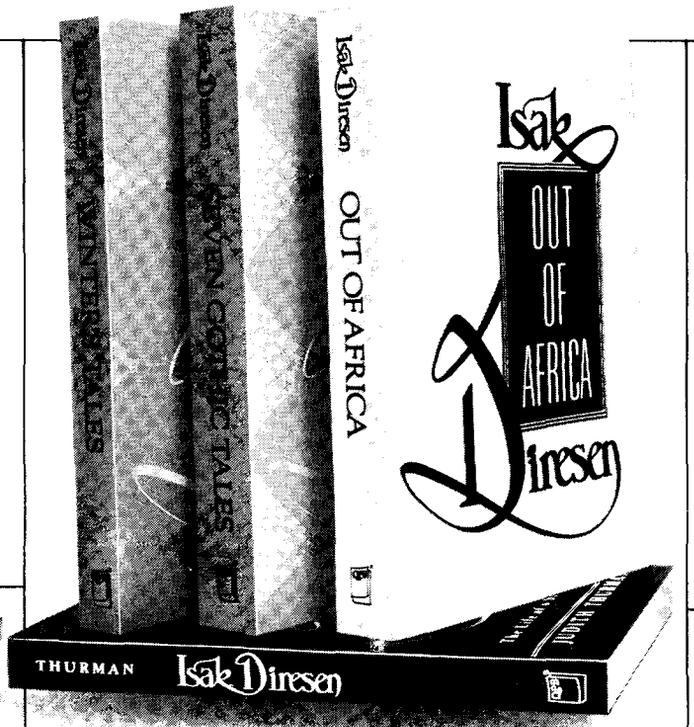

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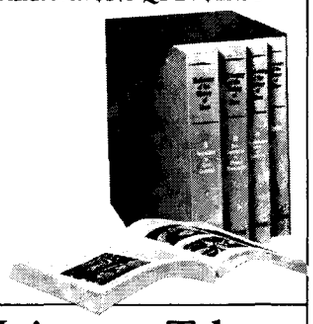

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CORRESPONDENCE

POLES AND THE HOLOCAUST

To the editors:

In Abraham Brumberg's article "What Poland Forgot" (December 16), he reveals a basic problem shared by most Jewish writers—an unwillingness to face honestly the facts that Jews were not the only victims of the Holocaust and that Polish-Jewish relations did not revolve exclusively around anti-Semitism.

In order to obscure the sufferings of the Poles, Brumberg omits the significant fact that as many Polish Christians as Polish Jews died in the Holocaust. Then he falsifies the history of wartime Poland by describing most Poles as anti-Semites in order to depict the Polish people as co-conspirators instead of co-victims of the Holocaust.

Ignoring the tremendous rescue work of *Zegota*, in which thousands of Jews were saved at considerable risk to the Poles (Poland was the only country where the Germans automatically executed Christians for helping Jews), Brumberg includes an anti-Semitic quote attributed to the organization without citing a source for it, thus denigrating the sacrifices of thousands of Poles. He claims that before January 1943 Jews received only a few pistols from the Polish Home Army. But he omits that Jewish passivity and Communist influence in the Jewish underground understandably did not inspire confidence within the anticommunist Home Army. After the Jews' very belated effort to resist the Germans in January, the Polish underground gave considerable aid to the Jews.

What is needed is a better understanding of the complexity and paradox of Polish-Jewish relations. We will never get it if Americans are constantly served a diet of hagiography about the Jews and distortions about the Poles.

RICHARD C. LUKAS
Tennessee Technological University
Cookeville, Tennessee

Abraham Brumberg replies:

Forty years on, Professor Richard Lukas is still unaware of the fundamental difference between the sufferings of the Poles (sufferings that it would be monstrous either to "obscure" or deny) and those of the Jews. The former were treated abominably. Many were killed. The vast majority of them, however, were permitted to live. The latter were, every one of them, condemned to death. Nor does Lukas seem to be familiar with some standard historical works, such as (to mention but a couple) *The Jews of Warsaw, 1939-1943* by Israel Gutman and *Polish Society Under German Occupation* by Jan Gross, both of which contain impeccably documented evidence that gives the lie to some of his assertions and obiter dicta.

Contrary to Mr. Lukas's claim, I never described Poles as "co-conspirators" in the Holocaust. I merely said that "many of them could not care less about what happened to their neighbors." In other words, they were not killers, but anti-Semites. Let me quote from the telegram, which Gross cites in his book, sent on September 25, 1941, by the commander of the Home Army in Poland to the Polish government in exile: "Please accept it as a fact that the overwhelming majority of the country is antisemitic. Even socialists are not an exception in this respect. The only differences concern how to deal with the Jews."

Professor Lukas taxes me for not saying enough about *Zegota*. I have written about it before and will say it again: *Zegota* did indeed perform "tremendous rescue work." My admiration for these heroic people is boundless. It detracts not one whit from *Zegota*'s courage to acknowledge that it had to "justify" its activities by affirming its own hostility to the Jews, precisely *because* of the prevailing anti-Semitic feelings (source: *Prawda*, Warsaw, May 1942).

Finally, it was the profoundly anti-Semitic attitude of the leaders of the Home Army that accounted for the small number of weapons supplied to the Jewish Fighting Organization, despite its agonized pleas. My source for the number of weapons is Leon Mitkiewicz, the representative of the Home Army in Washington, in "The Warsaw Uprising: From My Washington Notebook" (*Zeszyty Historyczne*, No. 1, 1972). Mr. Lukas's claim that "the Polish underground gave considerable aid to the Jews" after January 1943 is humbug. And his comment on "Jewish passivity and Communist influence in the Jewish underground" is an obscene canard borrowed from the vocabulary of the anti-Semitic National Democrats, whose standard image of the Jew was at once that of a cringing coward and a communist. The truth is that the Communists constituted but a small part of the united Jewish Fighting Organization in Warsaw, whose leaders were either left-wing Zionists or socialists (Bundists). The Jews in Warsaw resisted by trying to stay alive and pursuing their communal activities. Their insurrection was nothing but a conscious act of collective suicide.

A NEW ANTHEM

To the editors:

Plaudits for "Star-Spangled Earache" by Caldwell Titcomb (December 16) encouraging us to dump our national anthem. All my life, with much guilt, I thought "The Star Spangled Banner" was a "dog" and a royal pain and "America the Beautiful" much preferable.

S. E. WRENN
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

I vote for "You're a Grand Old Flag."

MARVIN A. FREEDLAND
San Diego, California

To the editors:

Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land." No other piece of music is more moving or eloquent in conveying a sense of our country. It is also a song that passes with flying colors Mr. Titcomb's tests for singability and native origin.

ERIC G. REICHARD
Brookline, Massachusetts

To the editors:

"Yankee Doodle"—probably the only patriotic song in the world that takes what was originally a term of abuse and, by humor and sheer force of will, exults in it.

JOHN ERNST FIELDS
Madison, Wisconsin

To the editors:

The national anthem is not to be judged like a song auditioning for inclusion in a Broadway show. As for choosing "America the Beautiful" as a replacement, I suspect as many wince at florid clichés like "alabaster cities," "fruited plains," and "purple mountain majesties." Whose national anthem can stand up to this kind of classroom scrutiny? What matters is how you *feel* when you hear it, and a lot of us feel pretty good.

ESTHER M. O'BRIEN
Everett, Massachusetts

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JANUARY 27, 1986

MOVE OVER, MUAMMAR

Chancellor Bruno Kreisky of Austria rolled out the red carpet for the arrival of Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi at Vienna's Schwechat Airport on March 10, 1982. A thousand specially trained Cobra antiterrorist troops guarded the airport and motorcade route to Qaddafi's hotel. The dictator donned olive drab and a swagger stick for the occasion. Kreisky for his part praised Libya as a valuable trading partner and dismissed as propaganda American accusations that Qaddafi had sent assassination squads to the United States on a mission to kill his opponents. "There is absolutely no evidence for charges that Qaddafi is the so-called father of terrorism," Kreisky said.

On December 27, 1985, the carpet at Schwechat was red again, this time from the blood of dozens of holiday travelers killed and wounded by flying shrapnel and bullets. Austria's crack Cobra troops were nowhere to be found. However, Qaddafi was there again, in spirit at least. Standing in for him were the gunmen of the Abu Nidal Palestinian faction responsible for the simultaneous attacks in Vienna and in Rome. The terrorists carried Tunisian passports that Libyan authorities had confiscated from Tunisian migrant workers in Libya earlier this year. Like other terrorists, their leader Abu Nidal receives financial support, military hardware, and sanctuary in Libya.

For years Qaddafi was lampooned as a comical Third World fascist impersonator, or at worst a North African version of Idi Amin. Even the revelation in 1979 that President Carter's brother Billy was acting as an agent for the Libyan government served more to amuse than outrage the American press. Yet Qaddafi is anything but funny. By now his not-so-secret recipe for Pan-Islamic fanaticism is familiar: terrorism, subversion, assassination, and an occasional invasion of a neighboring country.

Within three years after seizing power in 1969, Qaddafi signaled his acceptance of terror as a normal aspect of statecraft by offering safe haven to the Palestinians, directed by Yasir Arafat, who slaughtered the Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics. By supporting such groups, the leader of a powerless desert regime found a way to command global attention. Throughout the 1970s he backed revolutionary elements in trouble spots as diverse as Latin America, Northern Ireland, West Germany, and Sudan.

A ruthless dictator makes plenty of enemies among his own people. Qaddafi is no exception. He insists on tracking down and eliminating his opponents, wherever they might be. In 1980 alone, six Libyan exiles were shot and killed by Qaddafi's infamous "hit squads" in office buildings, cafés, and hotels in several European capitals. In April 1984 a diplomat inside the Libyan Embassy in London fired out a window on a crowd of anti-Qaddafi demonstrators, wounding 11 and killing a British constable on the street.

It is a pathetic and revealing comment on current standards of international conduct that most Western European nations maintain full diplomatic and economic ties with Qaddafi's outlaw state. Italy, for example, is Qaddafi's foremost trading partner. The Italians send Libya roughly 15,000 guest workers to help, among other things, extract the petroleum from Libya's deserts that goes to pay for Qaddafi's military adventures. Libya, in turn, owns 15 percent of the Fiat auto company. Twice burned, by the *Achille Lauro* episode and the recent attack at the airport in Rome, the Italians have yet to figure out that you cannot buy immunity from terror through exports and imports.

The refusal by Bonn, London, Paris, and Rome to cut off Libyan trade and diplomatic relations comes as no surprise. President Reagan was being too hopeful when he said Qaddafi was a pariah. Obviously we can't wait for the Europeans to join us in a united front against Qaddafi. But we can at least provide the Europeans with an incentive to get serious about security. Last year Congress passed the International Airport Security Act, which requires the State Department and the Federal Aviation Administration to evaluate all foreign airports according to accepted security standards.

If, say, the Rome airport is deemed dangerous (and the fact is that no airport is safe in a country that has a Libyan embassy), the Italians have 60 days to improve conditions. After that, the secretary of state issues an advisory to American travelers. The president must then prohibit our own airlines from landing at Rome *and* deny landing rights in the U.S. to Alitalia, Italy's national airline. Greece lost millions of dollars last year following American and British

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warnings about lax safety at the Athens airport. Marked improvements already have been reported there.

Airport security can secure just so much. The president has decided for now to forgo military retaliation against Libya. One wonders why a president, on whose watch a record number of Americans have been killed by terrorists, cannot bring himself to order strikes against military bases and training camps in Libya—like the one carried out by Israel against the PLO base in Tunis.

First, though, President Reagan ought to turn to the CIA for a solution to the Libyan menace. An executive order originally signed by President Ford expressly prohibits all persons employed by the U.S. government from engaging in assassination plots. But efforts to topple a criminal regime through a third nation or opposition party are perfectly legal. Qaddafi would long since have been just a bad memory if President Carter hadn't aborted a plan bequeathed to him by his predecessors to back an eager Egypt in military action against the Tripoli regime.

In addition to his many exiled enemies, Qaddafi has opponents within Libya willing to risk their lives to remove him. He has alienated career military officers displaced by "Revolutionary Guards" loyal to the dictator alone. A Libyan army officer reportedly managed to shoot Qaddafi in the jaw during a failed attempt on his life in 1981. Last year Libya confirmed that several dozen air force officers mutinied against Qaddafi after receiving orders to invade Tunisia. These disaffected elements, not to mention nations such as Egypt, Sudan, and Chad, deserve our active support in their fight to rid the Middle East of this particular scourge.

But the near-exclusive focus on Qaddafi and Abu Nidal misses the larger point. Terrorism has been part of the routines of Arab political life for years. It is unpleasant to write this and to read this. But it is the truth. A forthcoming book by Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Siege*, shows how the extremist consensus among Palestinian Arabs has always been enforced by terror and assassination. In colonial days, leaders such as Haj Amin Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, were always denying their responsibility for the terrorists, and the British were always eager to believe them. This was even then a transparent game, an example of the forked tongue through which the Middle East speaks.

The fixation on Abu Nidal and his latest sponsor obscures the harsher and more intractable reality that terror is the reflex of governments and movements we wish to perceive as reasonable and which we conceive of as partners in compromise, but which have never shown any inclination to settle permanently for less than what they imagine they might somehow win by terror.

The virtually unmentioned party these days is Syria, which perhaps, unlike the suicidal maniacs, makes political calculations and therefore can be deterred. Under President Assad, Syria has been at least as egregious a patron and mobilizer of terror as Qaddafi—and with far greater impact on the real politics of the region. There are Palestinian ultras under Syria's protection just as indiscriminate in their bloodletting as Abu Nidal—whose group now enjoys Syria's hospitality as well. That's a change. The Nidal gang used to be supported by Iraq, Assad's sworn enemy (but regarded as a friend by many in the U.S. State Department).

In the world of Palestinian and Arab terror, alliances and enmities are not stable. Loyalties constantly shift in the various wings and winglets of the PLO, often for unaccountable or petty reasons. Some factions, moreover, have been created simply for tactical purposes to give cover and respectability to others. There are, of course, also deep and abiding hatreds among some of the factions.

To be sure, Abu Nidal and Qaddafi are the wildest cannons at the moment. The quantity of terrorism would decline somewhat in a world without them. But it would still be a world in which terrorists are being exhorted, trained, and deployed from Syria and Iran and South Yemen to perform those acts of murder to which the political culture of Arab Islam, in its alternately entranced and demoralized states, seems now habituated. And if there weren't an Abu Nidal, Yasir Arafat would invent him. In fact, he already has: his name is Mohammed Abbas.

NOTEBOOK

□ DEMENTIA AND MRS. THATCHER: Two British psychologists report in a recent issue of the London *Spectator* that many patients who are so mentally ill that they don't know where they are or what day or year it is or even their own names are nevertheless able to name Margaret Thatcher as prime minister. This is a recent development. "Neither Mr. Macmillan nor Mr. Wilson in their fifth year of office was recalled as often by the demented population. . . ." More people can identify Mrs. Thatcher than can identify the queen. The authors of the article ("Dementia and Mrs. Thatcher") tentatively attribute this remarkable finding to the prime minister's forceful personality. The real test will come, they say, when she is a former prime minister. Asked to name the previous prime minister, seriously ill patients are most likely to name Churchill than . . . what was his name?

□ PTELL IT TO PTOLEMY: "We are so Copernican here in Washington; we think the world revolves around us."

—Political consultant Patrick Caddell
in the *Wall Street Journal*, December 30.

□ CONTEST: In last week's issue, TRB quoted Dr. Armand Hammer's description of Stalin as "unassuming" and wrote that this "may hold the world record for bad judgment of character." Can anyone beat this one? Readers are invited to submit other examples, either real or imagined. The best ones will be published in this space and the winner will receive a book from New Republic Books. Write to Contest 86-1, c/o Jamie Baylis, THE NEW REPUBLIC, 1220 19th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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POSTCARD COLORADO

TROUBLESOME GULCH

Kittredge, Colorado

GARY HART'S new home in the Rockies is an old stone rambler with thick evergreen trees crowding around the foundation. A small, hand-carved sign above the front door identifies the place as "Three Pines." But the world is fast coming to know it by a more colorful moniker: Troublesome Gulch.

That's the name of the dirt road that winds for a half-mile along an icy creek bed from the main highway to Hart's rustic abode. There are no neighbors in sight, and Hart family dogs, flown out from Washington for the Christmas holidays, provide the only visible security. But the place is a Secret Serviceman's dream; sealing off the narrow canyon from the outside would be a snap.

History abounds. According to Hart, who decided after the 1984 campaign to abandon his east-side Denver condominium for a piece of the Old West, stagecoaches once rattled past the front door on their way to Colorado's capital city. Today a car can cover the distance in about 45 minutes. Hart says the oldest portion of the house dates from the 1880s. Lee, understandably reluctant to dispute her husband on matters of age, thinks turn-of-the-century might be more accurate.

If solitude is what he wants, Gary Hart can hide away in Troublesome Gulch. But civilization isn't far. Trendy Evergreen, with its five-star food and upscale watering holes, is a five-minute drive away. Even handier is funky Kittredge, which sports a post-hippie commercial mix of art gallery, cafés, and bars.

These foothills are Denver's promised land for wealthy exurbanites. The area appears to hold a special attraction for rich Texans. Among those who have found homes here are singer Willie Nelson and the family of would-be presidential assassin John W. Hinckley Jr.

News accounts portray Hart's house as a "log and stone cabin," but that description, though perhaps inevitable, is slightly misleading. This is no cramped shack, but a modest, multiroomed house. The exterior is almost entirely of stone, though some logs were used. Inside is everything a mountain retreat is supposed to be, with an elk hide and mounted deer's head on the walls and logs popping and hissing in the fireplace.

Already, camp followers of presidential politics are tramping the snow-covered path to Hart's door. In the past few weeks leading up to his announcement January 4 that he won't seek another Senate term, Hart has invited leading political reporters from the television networks, news magazines, and major papers to interview him in his new digs. "Everybody high enough in the pecking order gets to go to his home in Colorado," cracks Colorado Republican chairman Howard "Bo" Callaway, playing on the status anxiety of reporters who were only granted interviews at a Denver hotel.

Accusing Hart of inventing a Western image to boost his presidential ambitions, Callaway jabs at him for trying to sink roots "where he never [had them] before." Hart responds that his new mountain home is the fulfillment of a childhood dream. As a seven-year-old Kansan in 1944, he saw the Rockies for the first time, he says, and wanted someday to make them his home. He dismisses Callaway's remarks as the politically inspired ravings of a Republican from Georgia, "where carpetbagging may have been invented."

Hart plans to make Kittredge his principal residence when he leaves the Senate next year. He has begun spicing his speeches with references to Troublesome Gulch, saying that some trouble is exactly what he plans to be for Republicans (and presumably his Democratic foes) in 1988.

Brushing aside the notion that the cabin is just so much image-building, Hart supporters point out that Walter Mondale bought a house in the suburbs of St. Paul, Minnesota, just before the 1984 campaign. But Mondale was born, educated, and elected to state office in Minnesota. Hart was with a Denver law firm for something under seven years before his election to the Senate in 1974.

Hart frankly concedes that a Rocky Mountain base is more attractive politically than a Washington one for the 1988 presidential race. But he maintains that his new home is proof only that he is a country boy at heart, not fresh evidence of a cunning tactical mind at work.

Reporters who visited him there say Hart does seem unusually relaxed in his new surroundings. Friends insist he's really content there. "It's a spiritual home for him. He's so happy," said Kathy Bushkin, his former press secretary. "It's kind of who he thinks he is."

PAUL WEST

Paul West is national political correspondent of the *Baltimore Sun*.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

DESIGNATED SCAPEGOAT

LET'S PLAY the blame game, Washington-style. Here's the situation. Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III and his guru, Under Secretary Richard Darman, are pursuing an unusual legislative strategy. They are relying on a Democrat, Chairman Dan Rostenkowski of the House Ways and Means Committee, to get President Reagan's tax-reform bill, or something resembling it, through the House of Representatives. For a few days in December,

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however, the strategy of counting on Rosty falters, as House Republicans overwhelmingly reject the bill that Rostenkowski's committee produces. Tax reform is threatened with an early death. Who's to blame for this mess?

That's easy, you say. Since Republicans voted massively against the tax-reform bill, they're responsible. Wrong. Well, then the blame must fall on Baker and Darman, since their strategy didn't work out as planned. Wrong again. O.K., so it's Rostenkowski, who brought forth a bill that couldn't get through the House. Wrong once more. Give up? The correct answer is Donald T. Regan, the White House chief of staff. His sin, as anyone who'd read a paper or watched a TV news show should have known, was delaying a presidential endorsement of Rosty's bill. This gave GOP resentment time to fester, let opponents of the bill mobilize, etc. You know the rest.

Blaming Regan for the glitch in getting tax reform through Congress is like faulting ground observers in Hawaii for the Pearl Harbor attack—the matter was out of their hands. If anything, Regan was part of the solution, not the problem. He helped run an effective lobbying effort that salvaged tax reform in the House. But never mind. Regan got no credit for that; the revival of tax reform was said to be President Reagan's doing. That's the way the roles break down. If anything goes wrong, blame Regan. He's the administration's designated scapegoat. If anything goes right, credit someone else.

EVEN WHEN things go swimmingly, Regan gets a heavy dose of blame. He's been chief of staff for a year now, a year when Reagan didn't have too much to complain about, though the Bitburg visit was no fun. The economy chugged along, not exactly booming but hardly receding either. Congress reversed itself and went along with aid to the anti-Sandinista rebels in Nicaragua. Reagan held a gabfest in Geneva with Mikhail Gorbachev that was proclaimed a success. And tax reform, after all, did move closer to final passage. To top things off, Reagan's popularity soared to new heights. Yet the verdict on Regan was harshly unfavorable.

Lou Cannon of the *Washington Post* declared at year's end that "strategic disarray . . . has become commonplace at the White House" under Regan's leadership. With Regan as chief of staff, Reagan is losing "the prospects for a successful completion of his presidency," Cannon concluded. The gang on ABC-TV's "This Week with David Brinkley" was rougher still. George Will offered a short list of blunders on Regan's watch—Bitburg, the clumsy firing of Margaret Heckler as secretary of health and human services, tax reform's bumpy road. "That very litany . . . of disasters," said columnist Tom Wicker of the *New York Times*, "calls Mr. Regan's stewardship into question." For Reagan, firing Regan "must be very much on his mind," Wicker added.

Sam Donaldson, ABC-TV's White House correspondent, announced who would get Regan fired and who would replace him. When First Lady Nancy Reagan looks at Regan's failures, "I think Mrs. Reagan may come against Donald T. Regan, in which case Donald T. Regan is gone," Donaldson said. And Baker, who was chief of staff before Regan, might come back to his old job. "Memories are that Jim Baker made it work. Now this may be unfair to Don Regan, but fair or unfair, he hasn't made it work, and Baker did."

ALL THIS Regan bashing is illogical. Every newsman in Washington and virtually anyone on Capitol Hill will tell you, correctly, that Reagan delegates much authority to his staff, more than any president in recent memory, including Dwight D. Eisenhower. As a result, he is somewhat at the mercy of his staff. In other words, it must do well for him to do well. So when Reagan has a moderately successful year, as was the case in 1985, that means the staff was at least as successful, right? No, no. Regan, so the Washington judgment goes, isn't hacking it. The unbelievably popular president needs a new chief of staff.

One of the sillier bits of blame has it that Regan drove Robert McFarlane out as Reagan's national security adviser. Virtually all the print and television reports had it that McFarlane, who quit in December, was "one of Mr. Regan's victims," as Brinkley said on his show. You might gather from these reports that McFarlane was a softy who couldn't stand up to a tough ex-corporate boss like Regan. Far from it. McFarlane is a former Marine lieutenant colonel and protégé of Henry Kissinger who rose through the ranks of two of the most treacherous bureaucracies in Washington, the Senate staff and the foreign policy apparatus at the State Department and the National Security Council. He didn't quit because Regan was overbearing.

Sillier still is the idea that Regan has surrounded himself with a personal staff that is loyal to him but not to Reagan. This doesn't make any sense unless Regan is being accused of being disloyal to Reagan, which he isn't. So if Regan's underlings are loyal to him, they must be loyal to Reagan too. Indeed, there's every reason to believe they are. Nevertheless, Roger Mudd tossed the loyalty charge at Regan on NBC-TV's "American Almanac" the day after Christmas. Regan denied it. What White House official in his right mind wouldn't have?

Regan isn't the first designated scapegoat at the Reagan White House. He's just the first to get all the blame, whether times are good or bad. In the first term, when there were three top aides, blame was spread around, a little for Baker, a bit more for Michael K. Deaver, a lot for Edwin Meese III. Now there's only Regan. He likes a staff system in which everything on its way to Reagan passes through his office. It's orderly, but it makes him an easy target.

Regan's biggest problem is not that he's a failure as chief of staff, but that he's a failure at dealing with the press. You don't win over reporters who cover the White House

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by being inaccessible and by telling them as little as possible on those rare occasions when you are available. In his years as chief of staff, Baker was always available to reporters and always helpful. The result? The press thumps Regan and hungers for the good old days. Just listen to Sam Donaldson and you'll get the drift.

FRED BARNES

BUSINESS WATCH

DING DONG

Once you get chief executive in your blood, it's hard to get it out.
—Hicks Waldron

THERE HE WAS, that Sunday in early December, on the cover of the *New York Times Magazine*. Hicks Waldron (drumroll, please): CEO. He looked like a CEO, sitting in the private jet that no CEO can be without, his brow furrowed, his jacket off, his tie slightly askew, fondling a bunch of important-looking corporate papers. He was wearing that "It's-a-tough-job-but-somebody's-got-to-do-it" look that chief executive officers have made so fashionable lately—that look that said he deserved every penny of his $800,000 salary. From the cover of the magazine, he seemed the very essence of CEO-ness, which, upon inspection of the story itself, he certainly turned out to be.

The story was called "What It Takes: The Life of a CEO," and it struck me as a milestone of sorts, the final evidence that we really have entered the new Gilded Age. Step aside, Andrew Carnegie and Jay Gould. Make way for Iacocca of Chrysler and Smith of G.M., for Donald Trump and Ted Turner and all the other CEOs who have become the new American folk heroes, even as American business continues to stumble and fall. Make way, even, for the heretofore (and quite justifiably) obscure Hicks Waldron.

No detail of his life was too small, no utterance too mundane for his Boswell, *Times* business reporter N. R. Kleinfield. We watch Waldron complain about a piece of paper under a chair, watch him order linguine and meatballs at a restaurant. When Waldron asked his chauffeur, "Is that rain or bugs on the windshield?" by God, we were there.

Just one little problem. Back in the first Gilded Age, Carnegie, Gould, John D. Rockefeller et al. were creating America's industrial might. Ruthless and exploitative they surely were, but they also knew a thing or two about how to build and run a competitive steel plant. Modern-day CEOs like Hicks Waldron, on the other hand, seem to spend the bulk of their time giving away the store. It did not take deep reading between the lines of Kleinfield's gentle prose to see in this profile just about everything that is wrong with the people who are running America's large corporations.

Hicks Waldron's company is Avon Products Inc.—yes, as in "ding-dong-Avon-calling." The company has had some rough times of late. For years its essential strategy was to recruit ever-increasing numbers of "Avon ladies" to sell its 650 or so beauty products door-to-door. It was a kind of corporate pyramid scheme, a forerunner to Amway and other less respectable ventures.

Problem number one: the number of Avon ladies is down from an all-time high of 430,000 in 1982 to around 395,000 at the end of 1984. Problem number two: with women flooding the workplace—a trend Avon executives seemed to have missed entirely—fewer doors are being answered when the Avon ladies come a-ringing. Problem number three: when the doors are answered, fewer Avon products are being bought. Problem number four: profits have tumbled. In 1979 the company made $244 million; in 1984 profits were down 25 percent, to $181 million. Problem number five: thanks to problems one through four, the price of Avon stock is in the tank. A company that once sold for more than $140 a share is now selling for $27 a share. For all intents and purposes, Wall Street has given up on the company.

AND WHAT HAS Hicks Waldron, CEO, done about all this? To quote Kleinfield: ". . . strategic planning sessions to devise a curative plan for the corporation. Delegation, performance measurement and planning are the cornerstones of [Waldron's] management style." Lord knows, nothing gets a CEO's juices flowing like a good strategic planning session. For an entire year, Waldron scrutinizes the "32 separate chunks" that make up the company. The strategy sessions go long into the night, cutting deeply into Waldron's hourly wage. He and his management team look at dozens of charts and read hundreds of reports. Then the Plan emerges: the future, he boldly concludes, lies in seven of the 32 chunks, and that is where the company will spend its money. "Around the Avon watercoolers, the elite units came to be known as The Magnificent Seven," reports Kleinfield. The first among equals is the domestic beauty business.

But how to get this key business out of its nosedive? To start with, more meetings and more studies. Yet another plan emerges, revolving around the study of "socio-economic trends" (could I make this stuff up?), latching on to "hot" products and devising new direct sales channels. For instance, now that Waldron realizes that there are women in the work force, he has concluded that Avon should be trying to sell more cosmetics in offices! The plan even anticipates a further drop-off in Avon ladies, and calls for increased productivity from the ones who remain. So when the drop-off does come, nobody gets too upset. "After all," Kleinfield writes, "it was in the plan."

While Waldron is off attending some other pressing meetings, it becomes clear that the plan is not working out as, well, planned. The beauty products division is slipping further and further behind the projections, threatening even the most holy of holies, the annual dividend. With-

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out this sop, some of the stockholders might start to get noisy about the fact that their Avon investment has lost 85 percent of its value. In the face of this impending catastrophe, Waldron delegates. For months, his management technique has called for a weekly meeting with the head of the beauty division. Part of the point of the meeting, Waldron tells Kleinfield, is to remind the man that "if this didn't turn around his career was in jeopardy." Now he sends the man to Vienna, where the company is wining and dining its best sales managers, to find out why things haven't turned around the way they were supposed to.

When the division head returns, he gives Waldron the bad news. It turns out that all this time the national sales manager has been giving overoptimistic reports to his bosses. *Sacre bleu!* Hicks Waldron, CEO, Kleinfield reports, is "visibly shaken by the news."

Well, you know things are going to have to change at Avon after this revelation. Acting decisively, Waldron and his division manager can the national sales manager, bring in some new people, most notably a woman executive who was formerly the director of corporate communications (a.k.a. head flack). She admittedly has no sales experience, but Waldron tells Kleinfield that he likes her "spunk." She in turn does a neat bit of delegating herself, hiring a consultant to evaluate the recruiting of Avon ladies for the beauty products division. Then there is a strategic planning session, and there are charts, graphs, and reports from the consultant. There is a new plan devised, with a new timetable. Waldron turns up the heat, as only a CEO can: "If you can't get the job done," he tells this new team in that blunt, bold style that marks the American CEO, "we'll put somebody else in there." A month later they're back, their tails between their legs. The new plan isn't doing any better than the old one. They need another million dollars or so. At the end of the meeting, Waldron takes one of the new people aside and declares that if things don't start to get better fast, "we are going to have to re-examine our strategy. . . ."

WHAT'S WRONG with this picture? Mr. Kleinfield, put your hand down. With all this meeting and planning and delegation, what does Hicks Waldron actually know about beauty products in general, about Slick Tint for Lips, Natural Creamy Wash-Off Cleanser, Ultra Tough Hot Oil Nail Treatment, and the other 647 Avon products in particular? What does he know about door-to-door sales? In the two years he's been running Avon, Waldron seems to have learned next to nothing about any of these things. At one point, in a moment that unwittingly summarizes his approach to running a Fortune 500 company, Waldron admits, "If these changes don't work, we have a much deeper problem than anyone knows. . . . we'll have to make another move. But I don't know what it is yet."

But why should professional managers bother learning about what makes the company tick? Most of them see corporations as interchangeable, and consequently company-hopping has become an acceptable way of life. By the time the modern manager starts to understand what drives the soft drink business, he has been lured away to run a computer company. Look at Hicks Waldron. He began his career at the bottom of the totem pole at General Electric and spent the next 27 years climbing the corporate ladder there. He really knew something about what made General Electric tick; but he didn't know if he could ever make it to the top at G.E. Being a CEO was what he wanted out of life, so when Heublein Inc., the liquor company, called, he answered. Then Heublein was taken over by R. J. Reynolds, and rather than remain where he would just be another corporate minion, he jumped to Avon. "Once you get chief executive in your blood . . ."

Waldron tells Kleinfield that he "tried to look at Avon as a stockholder would look at it." How noble of him. But a little further on we read that his own investment portfolio consists mainly of real estate and blue-chip stocks like RCA, IBM, and the company he knows best, G.E. Avon is conspicuously missing from the list. His enormous bonus (a shade under $300,000) is tied neither to the stock price nor—if you read closely—to Avon's actual performance. In this second Gilded Age, only suckers put their own money at risk, and unlike, say, stockholders, the professional manager is not a sucker.

From time to time Waldron does visit the troops—a lunch with a group of middle managers one day; a visit with an Avon lady making a sales call another—but he seems uninterested in anything he might learn from such visits. He calls it, contemptuously, "mother-in-law" research. If he were ever to wake up and do a little more such research, he would see that his own women executives won't use Avon products. Even his wife, who at the insistence of her husband has bought the full line of products, keeps her "good stuff" (i.e., non-Avon cosmetics) tucked away for special occasions. Somehow, that pretty much tells me what I want to know about Avon.

JOSEPH NOCERA

Joseph Nocera is a senior editor of *Texas Monthly*.

A new pill and the abortion debate.

ARE YOU FOR RU-486?

UNLESS YOU BELIEVE in infanticide, your stand on abortion depends on when you think life begins. In 1973 the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision showed some ambivalence on the question. On the one hand it said that life began with viability, on the other that no one could say for sure what determined viability, and that the pregnant woman had the right to decide how best to protect her own "health." As Sandra Day O'Connor pointed

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out ten years later, *Roe v. Wade* "is clearly on a collision course with itself." O'Connor argued that as medical science made abortions safe later in pregnancy, the decision would encourage women to protect their health, broadly defined, with ever-later abortions. But as medical breakthroughs also rolled back fetal viability to earlier stages of pregnancy, *Roe v. Wade* would encourage pro-lifers to challenge ever-earlier abortions.

The O'Connor collision may never occur. A new drug known as RU-486, which enables women to perform abortions privately at home, could well transform, if not end, the abortion debate. Developed by the French drug company Roussel-Uclaf, RU-486 is a steroid compound being tested in Paris, Stockholm, and the University of Southern California. The drug blocks the cells in the lining of the uterus from receiving progesterone, the hormone that builds up the uterine wall, allowing the fertilized ovum to implant in the womb and mature. Deprived of progesterone, the wall of the uterus breaks down, just as it does in a normal menstrual cycle. The ovum breaks off from the uterine wall and is discharged in a period. Unlike the so-called morning-after pill, RU-486 does not contain massive dosages of estrogen, which causes unhealthy side effects and thus limits its use to rape cases and other emergencies.

ALTHOUGH RU-486 is at least five years away from the commercial market, it is currently being tested as a chemical alternative to surgical abortions and as a post-coital contraceptive to replace current methods like the pill and the IUD, which have dangerous side effects that RU-486 may not have. Used instead of the pill and the IUD, a woman could take the drug on the last three days of each cycle, instead of the daily pill. If fertilization had occurred, RU-486 would prevent the ovum from implanting; if not, the drug would merely bring on her monthly period within 48 hours. Dr. Daniel Mishell says his trials at USC have revealed that 100 milligram doses of RU-486 have induced complete abortions in the first six weeks of pregnancy for 80 percent of the women who have taken it. Swedish tests have been 90 percent successful when RU-486 is supplemented with prosto-glandins, which induce mild contractions of the uterus. Several women bled seriously in early tests, but Mishell says fewer women have hemorrhaged in more recent trials with a lower dosage. He predicts the drug will prove to be safer and more effective when an optimal dose is found and tested in earlier pregnancies.

Thus a woman could take RU-486 safely and privately very soon after missing her period without ever knowing whether she was actually pregnant. This has pro-lifers understandably anxious. As Professor Etienne-Emile Beaulieu, the French biochemist who invented RU-486, told "The MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour" in September, "Abortion, in my opinion, should more or less disappear as a concept, as a fact, as a word in the future. . . ."

Of course, RU-486 will never make abortion disappear "as a fact." Just because someone isn't sure she's having an abortion doesn't mean she isn't having one. Abortions per se would not disappear with RU-486, but abortions late in pregnancy very well might. Because surgical abortions are physically and emotionally painful, most women wish away the early signs of pregnancy in what Mishell calls "the denial thing." Women often have abortions later than they would if the prospect were less daunting. With RU-486, a woman whose period is a few weeks late could have a relatively painless abortion just to be sure, ending the anxiety of "the denial thing," secure in the knowledge that it may not have been an abortion at all.

If RU-486 became the abortion method of choice in this country, the abortion debate would be over for many people who now consider it an open question. Polls show that the pro-life movement hasn't succeeded in increasing the number of Americans supporting a legal ban on abortion. They have succeeded in making Americans queasy about abortion generally. This soft support is very vulnerable to RU-486 because polls also show that Americans oppose early abortions less fervently and in fewer numbers than late abortions. For many of them, a six-week-old embryo is still closer to a fertilized ovum than a human being.

Martin Mawyer, editor of the *Moral Majority Report*, concedes that RU-486 would pare the ranks of pro-life sympathizers. Nonetheless, he says that with the distribution of the drug at least five years in the future, antiabortionists have plenty of time "to mount the necessary media campaign." But that campaign would look markedly different from the one that has served them so well. Grisly photographs of aborted fetuses, magnified microscopic pictures in utero, and films like *The Silent Scream* (see "Right-to-Life Porn" by Jefferson Morley, March 25, 1985) have effectively illustrated their point that the fetus is what National Right to Life Committee president Dr. John Wilke calls "a tiny new human." Unfortunately, an embryo at, say, four weeks looks more like a tiny new tadpole than a tiny new human, and this has Wilke worried. "We're really very simplistic, visually oriented people," he says, "and if what we destroy in there doesn't look human, then it will make our job more difficult."

It is also very likely that if RU-486 becomes the preferred method of abortion here, abortion clinics would become a thing of the past, replaced by 24-hour clinics to treat potential complications. This means that all those bites you see on the evening news of earnest women picketing abortion clinics with signs saying "ABORTION IS MURDER" would also become a thing of the past. Pro-lifers could take their pickets to the emergency clinics, but their sanctity-of-human-life stand would be less compelling.

IF RU-486 is also used monthly, pro-lifers would have a hard time convincing the public that the drug isn't just another contraceptive. Indeed, a 1982 *New York Times* story on Beaulieu and RU-486 described the drug as "a new birth control pill." Planned Parenthood released a "Fact Sheet" in October that refers to RU-486 as a type of "inter-

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ceptor (luteal contraception)," "post-coital contraception," and "birth control." If most people hear a new drug described as "birth control," they'll think of the pill and the IUD, not abortion.

And in a way, they'll be right. Depending on when it is taken, RU-486 works exactly the same way the pill and the IUD often work. The pill normally prevents pregnancy by suppressing ovulation. But many forms of the pill now contain lower doses of hormones to reduce side effects. Occasionally the low-dose pill fails to suppress ovulation and instead prevents the fertilized ovum from implanting in the uterus. As for the IUD, no one is entirely sure how it works (which makes you wonder why doctors have prescribed them to two million women). Studies suggest, however, that although IUDs sometimes block sperm from reaching the egg, they usually work by irritating the uterus and preventing implantation. If a woman took RU-486 within eight days of fertilization, she could be sure that the drug would do exactly what the IUD does, and what the pill sometimes does: prevent implantation.

PRO-LIFERS argue nonetheless that taking RU-486 is simply a chemical abortion. And this seems to make perfect sense—if you believe life begins at conception. But that depends on what you mean by "conception." When pro-lifers say "conception," they mean fertilization. But the federal courts and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology define "conception" as implantation. A federal appeals court overturned an Illinois law that used the pro-life definition in a statute requiring doctors to inform women that contraceptives that prevent implantation "cause fetal death." (The Supreme Court heard arguments on the case last month.) Wilke dismisses the ACOG definition. He says the pro-life definition of conception was the accepted one in medical circles for 150 years. But in the late 1960s, ACOG—"let me use the right word," Wilke stresses—"in cahoots with the Food and Drug Administration and the pharmaceutical companies, arbitrarily offered a new definition" so that the drug companies could call devices like the pill and the IUD contraceptives instead of abortifacients.

Medically, there's nothing arbitrary about the ACOG definition. Studies show that 40 to 60 percent of all fertilized ova fail to implant. The logical extension of the pro-life argument would require women to take progesterone to encourage implantation and prevent the accidental death of fertilized ova. If inducing abortion before implantation is murder, then not taking progesterone is tantamount to negligent homicide. Absurd.

If all this hairsplitting is making your eyes glaze over, you have some idea of how drastically RU-486 would recast the abortion debate. The great power of the pro-life position is its ability to cast the issue in black and white. Instead of arguing that abortion is murder, RU-486 could force antiabortionists to back up to some very shaky first principles.

But though RU-486 erases much ambiguity in the abortion debate, it will also create some. Take the fact that women could take it without ever knowing whether they are pregnant. Dr. Judith Tyson, medical director of Planned Parenthood of New England, thinks, "This is a perfect solution. Basically it just eliminates the whole question, and I think it's very nice that way." To be sure, if a woman uses RU-486 before implantation, the whole question eliminates itself. In many cases, however, RU-486 will work after implantation and will be no different than a surgical abortion. If more women come to use RU-486 than traditional contraceptives, abortion would be the preferred method of birth control in the United States—the pro-lifers' worst-case scenario come true. These chemical abortions would be performed much earlier than any doctor would perform surgical abortions now, but they would be abortions nonetheless. Americans may be much less opposed to early abortions than to late ones. But the belief that Americans have become so numb to the moral aspect of abortion that it has become just another form of birth control has turned more people against abortion than *The Silent Scream* ever will. With RU-486 the American public may not be able to have it both ways.

The biggest question women may have about RU-486 will probably be medical, not moral. Many would welcome a safe alternative to the pill and the IUD. And although RU-486 partisans note it has fewer side effects than most contraceptives, and is far less painful than a surgical abortion, the high dosages of the drug in earlier tests did cause dizziness. More recent studies suggest the most effective dose of RU-486 will be lower than the amount that affects the adrenal glands. And even if tests find the drug has no side effects, that's what doctors originally said about the pill and the IUD. Knowing that the first generation of RU-486 users will be guinea pigs for the drug's long-term side effects, many women may balk at using it.

Pro-lifers will no doubt be at the forefront of the medical attack. Bob Marshall, research director of the American Life Lobby, had almost nothing to say against RU-486 morally. Instead, he passionately denounced drug companies for having lied about the dangers of contraceptives, and contended that women should expect the same from Roussel-Uclaf on RU-486.

So RU-486 will leave pro-lifers plenty to feed on. But for those interested in a compromise on the abortion question, chemical abortions performed by women during the first six weeks of pregnancy will look pretty reasonable. Although hard-core antiabortion activists no doubt will hold their ground, RU-486 could make abortion exactly what the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision said it was—a private matter beyond the reach of the government or anyone else who opposes it.

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Washington journalism enters a rich new era.

THE BUCKRAKERS

BY JACOB WEISBERG

ANY HISTORY of Washington journalism would surely mark June 1972 as the beginning of a new chapter. That was when Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein started investigating a peculiar burglary at Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate. Thus began the era of the Washington muckraker. Woodward and Bernstein became famous, journalism became glamorous, and "investigative units" proliferated at newspapers and television stations across the country.

The same history might mark February 1985 as the start of the next era. That was when Patrick J. Buchanan went to work at the White House and his financial disclosure statement revealed, to widespread astonishment and envy, that he had made $400,000 as a journalist in 1984. This included $60,000 for his syndicated column, $25,000 for his weekly appearance on "The McLaughlin Group," $94,000 for Cable News Network's "Crossfire," $81,000 for a radio show, and more than $135,000 for 37 speeches. Welcome to the era of the buckraker.

Buchanan was by no means at the top of his profession. Television anchors and correspondents have always been lavishly paid. But several "print journalists" now earn more than half a million dollars, and many others are earning sums newspaper and magazine employees wouldn't have dreamed of 15 years ago. The bad news is that Washington's new class of buckrakers isn't making all that money by writing. Today's journalistic entrepreneurs are learning to sell themselves—or, more precisely, their "inside" knowledge and celebrity status.

Goodness knows, there's nothing wrong with paying journalists well. The most successful buckrakers represent a tiny fraction of their profession, yet they make no more than any number of run-of-the-mill partners in Washington law firms, who are no smarter or harder working. The problem isn't that buckrakers are overpaid. It's the effect that buckraking may be having on the craft of journalism.

The rewards of buckraking go to commentators, not reporters. The oldest and most respectable form of buckraking is the syndicated column. Traditionally this was the only way a journalist could break out of the salaried class. Figures are hard to come by, but David Shaw of the *Los Angeles Times* has estimated that James J. Kilpatrick, who is syndicated in about 500 papers, and George Will, whose column appears in about 400, earn close to $175,000 each from syndication. David Broder, Joseph Kraft, Carl Rowan, and Evans and Novak (together) probably earn about $100,000 from their columns.

But writing is just the platform for a buckraking career. The next step is television, ideally as a regular on one of the Washington panel shows. The allure of television is so great that print journalists are generally happy, even thrilled, to appear for free on CNN's "Crossfire" or the network morning shows. But other television opportunities pay fairly well, by print standards. The three regulars who spar on "The McLaughlin Group" receive $500 per show. Outsiders get $200. On "Agronsky & Company" substitutes earn about $375 and regulars are under contract to drone for substantially more. Journalists take home $500 for appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," and $1,000 for "This Week with David Brinkley."

Not only that. "The exposure is enormous," Martin Agronsky says. "If your face is known, people have a feeling about you from TV, and they are more likely to propose that you come and speak to them." Television can bring fame to print journalists, but it doesn't often directly bring wealth. The $25,000 a year that "McLaughlin" regulars earn for a few hours of extra work per week hardly seems a paltry sum, but it's a pittance compared to what the same performers stand to make on the lecture circuit.

Tom Neillsen of the Leigh Bureau, a lecture and literary agency in Princeton, offers his client, Strobe Talbott, *Time* Washington bureau chief, as a concrete example of the phenomenon. "Strobe has been more in demand since he has been on 'Agronsky,' " Neillsen says. "We've seen his fee increase from $3,000 to $5,000. And the number of dates has steadily increased. He's becoming more recognizable to the buyers."

Since Talbott is fairly new to television, his fee remains relatively low. George Will charges somewhere between $12,000 and $15,000, and gives, by some estimates, 40 speeches a year. Robert Novak costs about $6,000, and now gives fewer than 30, although he used to give many more. William Safire reportedly gives relatively few, but charges as much as $18,000. Current or former anchormen like Tom Brokaw, Walter Cronkite, and Eric Sevareid demand as much as $25,000. "There's no excuse for the busiest man in the world not to make an extra hundred thousand or two," says Dan T. Moore of the International Platform Association, the trade association of the lecture business. "Especially journalists." (Many who get these

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high fees, it should be added, also often speak for free or for much less.)

Only a few years ago, lecture agents generally considered talking about their clients' fees a breach of confidence. When a TNR editor wrote a piece on the lecture business in 1981, she had trouble getting anyone to give prices. Most of the lecture bureaus I spoke with only had to be asked to reveal what their notable clients charge. Like the growth and commercialization of influence-peddling, boasting about lecture fees is another example of the new brazenness in Washington about wanting and making money. The cult of the Washington Insider is a religion in which lecture fees are one of the few ways to measure comparative priestly standing. Most journalists, however, willing as they are to ask others about their sources of income, consider questions about their earnings intrusive, and declined to confirm their reported fees—perhaps out of embarrassment.

SOME OF THIS DEMAND for Washington journalists as public speakers still comes from traditional sources: civic organizations, such as churches and women's auxiliaries, and universities, where student council presidents are as eager as ever to press the flesh with people who might prove useful to them. The growth area in the Washington lecture business, though, is corporations and trade associations. The National Pork Producers Council, the Potato Chip/Snack Food Association, and the American Banking Association all pay journalists exorbitant sums for brief performances.

"They'd like somebody with a Washington Insider perspective," Washington lecture agent Joe Cosby says. "I recently booked David Brinkley for one of these organizations. 'What's he going to talk about?' they said. 'What do you want him to talk about?' I answered. They couldn't care less. We called his speech 'Inside Washington Today.' They loved it."

The National Association of Chain Drugstores has an annual budget of $200,000 for speakers and a full-time staff that selects them. In recent years the association has listened to William Safire, the entire "McLaughlin Group," and George Will, twice. Why do they like journalists? "They are celebrities of the political world and the media. It's entertainment and education," says one of the group's employees who books speakers. Jack Harmon, who is associate director of conventions for the American Banking Association, says that "speakers in a current events area can add an insight into what's going on and add some credible comments that fit into the program."

In a roundabout way, all indicate that what they really want is to gaze directly at people they've seen on television, or at least in those little sketches next to the bylines on their local Op-Ed page. A Washington journalist can provide this little thrill—and a nice break from discussions about pork or interest rates—without abandoning the pretense that this convention is serious work.

"You can't write the same article over and over again. But you can earn $3,000 by giving the same speech again and again," says Jack Limpert, editor of the *Washingtonian*. "A lot of these guys have been very poor most of their lives. It's very seductive—the easy money seems to be there. But you get ruined as a writer."

One problem is time and energy. Even giving the same speech again and again can be draining if it involves flying across the country, changing planes at O'Hare, making conversation for several hours with your hosts, and so on. Then there is the mental corruption of rewarming and serving up the same or similar material again and again, which may seep into your writing.

Finally, if you give 40 speeches a year, you spend an inordinate amount of time with business executives and spokesmen for various industries. This can affect your thinking. It's not a question of quid pro quo corruption. No one is going to sacrifice a scoop or change positions on an important issue just because of a speaking engagement—although the temptation must be very strong to write about tax reform instead of defense fraud if you've got a gig next week with General Dynamics.

The real danger is that you begin to absorb the conventional wisdom of the burghers you are being paid to fraternize with. Syndicated columnist Ben Wattenberg, who has spoken to corporations and trade associations, takes a more benign view. "You speak to the big widget trade association and you learn a lot about big widgets," he says. But business executives who can afford to pay you thousands of dollars to come visit are, to say the least, a highly unscientific sampling of life "outside the Beltway."

THE EPICENTER of the buckraking storm is "The McLaughlin Group," a weekly political talk show hosted by former Jesuit priest John McLaughlin, who served in the Nixon White House and is now Washington editor of *National Review*. McLaughlin's program gives the best kind of exposure to journalists, since it not only shows their faces, but presents them as lively characters. The "McLaughlin" regulars even tour, performing *ensemble*, for fees ranging up to $15,000, before groups like Footwear Industries of America and the National Association of Manufacturers. At a NAM meeting in Boca Raton, Florida, McLaughlin even used a NAM official as one of his debaters. There is always at least one spot to fill, since according to Joe Cosby, who has booked the group for some of these performances, Novak refuses to join the show on the road because he can earn more speaking by himself.

A source at the National Association of Chain Drugstores, which recently booked "The McLaughlin Group," says: "They're the new kids on the block—a hot number." He adds that they used to book "Agronsky & Company" to perform as a group, but that "the personalities on that team are just ridiculous and they're too difficult to deal with." Although the substance of both shows is quite similar, the pace of "McLaughlin" and its air of personal enmity give viewers the sense that they are watching genuine insider banter. It recently surpassed "Agronsky" in the ratings war.

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John McLaughlin is a television genius. His show is wonderful entertainment. But with its gimmickry and phony drama, its relentless emphasis on who's up and who's down, its pointless predictions and rankings of everything from one to five, "The McLaughlin Group" has contributed materially to the trivialization of Washington journalism. And being on programs like "McLaughlin" has become the measure of success for political journalists. "Appearing in print with good stories and being paid a good salary is no longer enough," says Walter Shapiro of *Newsweek*. "Everything is seen as being hopelessly tawdry and middle class if it's not an entry to being on TV." Although journalists get to speak only 30 words instead of crafting 1,000 into an essay, most of the ones I spoke to mentioned that what they say on "McLaughlin" is quoted back to them more often than what they write.

The more popular programs like "McLaughlin" become, the more they supersede careful writing as the preferred way for journalists to inform and persuade. Although George Will says that "everything else takes a backseat to writing," his basic vocation has suffered from his audience's paying more attention to his televised output on ABC.

BEYOND SYNDICATION, television, and speechmaking is a fourth dimension of buckraking, which the Evans and Novak cottage industry has been boldly exploring for a number of years. The team's first innovation was a newsletter, a vehicle traditionally reserved for specialized fields like gasket manufacture, where inside information can be well worth the several hundred dollars per year such publications usually cost. Evans and Novak publish two of these "confidential" biweeklies: a political report that costs $125 a year and a tax report that costs $200. They have a combined circulation of something under 2,000. Both provide a supposed "behind-the-scenes" look at politics, which generally amounts to the most trivial regurgitation of the headlines in the style of *Rolling Stone*'s "Random Notes." A lead item in the "Political Report" says, "The *spy* scare has more juice in it than the Administration is admitting, but *Israel* seems unlikely to suffer at all from the *Jonathan Jay Pollard* disclosures unless it refuses to cooperate on the probe. If that happens, U.S.-Israeli relations will drop to a low point fast."

If these newsletters contained valuable inside information, why would Evans and Novak deny it to the readers of their column? In truth, the newsletters are rip-offs, which only indicts those corporate executives who waste their shareholders' money on them. Conferences and seminars that Evans and Novak organize pose more significant questions of journalistic ethics. Subscribers to the newsletters—mostly business executives and political consultants—are invited, at $350 for the day, to participate in "off-the-record" discussions with Washington officials such as Treasury Secretary James Baker, his assistant Richard Darman, Representative Jack Kemp, and Robert McFarlane when he was White House national security adviser. The officials are paid between $500 and $1,000 to participate, which they often donate to charity. Money aside, the government officials are well advised not to turn down a request for their services from such powerful journalists. About 75 people attend these sessions a few times a year. Potentially more lucrative for Evans and Novak are weekend-long versions of these conferences in exotic locales. Last April they hosted Kemp, Bill Bradley, and others at a seminar in Bermuda, where participants paid $2,500 each. They're planning another conference in Puerto Rico for next spring.

Many journalists say it's a conflict of interest for Evans and Novak to be paying money to government officials they use as sources. Surely, though, the conflict is exactly the opposite: when an official helps Evans and Novak attract customers to their high-priced seminars, it looks more like a favor they've extracted from him than a favor they're doing him. But what's most disturbing is the other side of the transaction: Evans and Novak's selling their positions as reporters. Businessmen and consultants pay for the chance to share for a day the glamorous status of Washington journalists, who can talk to high public officials "off-the-record" (presumably hearing things too valuable for mere readers of their column). Journalists, peddling their insider status, have come a long way from the days when businessmen shunned them as social inferiors.

CAN ANYONE RESIST the appeal of buckraking? Even editors of THE NEW REPUBLIC have been known to succumb. Many people assume that syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft has eschewed the more vulgar aspects of buckraking, since he is rarely seen on television. But Kraft says with charming candor, "Frankly, I'm not very much in demand." He adds that he has turned down offers to appear on one particular program he declined to name, "where the level of discourse is pretty cretinous." One journalist who generally does refuse to appear on television or lecture for a fee is *Washington Post* columnist Mary McGrory. "I'd rather go back to Belfast than make a speech," she says, adding that she doesn't get ideas from speaking. "I am affronted when people say to me, 'What do you really think?' I write what I really think."

"It can become a distraction, causing us not to be good at any part of our lives," Strobe Talbott says, adding that he tries to limit himself to ten or 12 speeches a year. This leaves him more time for activities he considers more important—writing, above all, as well as sitting on the boards of two schools, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Carnegie Endowment.

But the Talbott model of reasonable restraint is not the buckraker's ideal. That ideal is more like the life-style of a celebrity journalist that William F. Buckley Jr. portrays so vividly in *Overdrive*—zipping in his limousine from cavorting with the president, to making speeches, to taping "Firing Line." And he always saves a few minutes to dash off his column. □

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The governor wins an 11-to-one jury room landslide.

THE TRIAL OF EDWIN EDWARDS

BY KEN BODE

New Orleans

TWO HOURS AFTER HIS TRIAL for racketeering, bribery, and mail and wire fraud ended in a mistrial, Governor Edwin Edwards strode into a combination news conference-political rally, the swagger restored to his step. The margin was 11 to one, the jury's vote for acquittal. A reporter shouted to Edwards: "What's your answer to those who will say, 'Edwin Edwards is guilty as hell, but the prosecution just wasn't smart enough to get him?' " Edwards paused, fixed his look of cherubic malevolence, and replied, "They're half right."

Politicians are adept at claiming victory, and if ever a politician needed one, it is Edwin Edwards, for modern-day Louisiana is a time and place prime for the populace to believe Mark Twain's dictum that politicians are the only "distinctly native criminal class." Edwards had spent the last 14 weeks in the federal courtroom of Judge Marcel Livaudais II. Outside the courthouse for much of that time was assembled a vast horde of state and national news media and their television brethren. Since Judge Livaudais ran the trial on a banker's schedule, it was a rare day that live reports and interviews were not broadcast throughout Louisiana during lunchtime shows and again for the 5 and 6 p.m. local news. This was called the Trial of the Century in Louisiana, and the charges against Edwards were leaked, written, and broadcast, editorialized on, and publicly chewed over like a polished dog bone, not just during the trial, but during the investigation, the grand jury proceedings, and the indictment. Somehow, when a public official is on trial, the answers to those charges never get quite the same amount of attention.

The trial was a *mano a mano* confrontation worthy of Hemingway. On one side, Edwin W. Edwards, the leading political rogue in a state with a reputation for tolerating rogue politics. In and out of office, the winner of over 15 election campaigns from City Council to state Senate to Congress and three times governor, Edwards has crafted his success by playing to that reputation. In the words of his friend and political associate Camille Gravel, "Edwin's greatest strength and his greatest weakness is his ability to come within a millimeter of the law without breaking it." Partly owing to that attitude, Edwards has attracted the attention of nine previous, unproductive grand juries (his most notorious brushes with the law came in the Brilab and Koreagate investigations).

Edwards's style, which has included a well-publicized fund-raising trip to Paris (where he rented the Palace at Versailles to host a dinner for his entourage), and gambling junkets to Las Vegas, Tahoe, and Monte Carlo, has been to *laissez les bon temps rouler*. He seems to embody the attitude of an earlier Louisiana governor who said, "When I took the oath of office, I didn't take a vow of poverty."

On the other side of the courtroom: John Volz, a U.S. attorney with a growing reputation as one of the most aggressive prosecutors in the federal system. One of the trophies on his wall is Carlos Marcello, kingpin of organized crime on the Gulf Coast, nailed in Brilab and sent to jail on charges of bribery and kickbacks.

A prosecutor throughout his legal career, Volz is a local New Orleans boy who graduated from Tulane Law and was schooled in the service of Orleans Parish district attorney Jim Garrison of Kennedy assassination conspiracy fame. All around him were the normal quid pro quos of city, state, and parish politics, and what Volz observed left him with a crusader's disdain for public corruption. "It has been the attitude of some public officials that public life is a way of self-enrichment. That is the reason they run for office," he has said. "For too long Louisiana has been synonymous with political corruption." That states his mission. Volz said that during one of his investigations, a candidate for governor told him, "Louisiana is like a banana republic."

John Volz made his reputation in zealous pursuit of official corruption. He bagged some small game (a sheriff, policemen, police jurors, a public contractor) and some medium-size (state commissioner of administration Charles Roemer II, and former state Senate president Michael O'Keefe), all Democrats. There aren't many Republicans holding state and local office in Louisiana. But Volz had yet to bag his biggest game, Governor Edwin Edwards: rich, having made ten million dollars in four years out of office; free, having thumbed his nose at prosecutors during the 1983 campaign; and in full strut, after a 62 percent victory in that election.

There is more to know about John Volz, namely his mixed political pedigree and his passion for a federal judgeship. Volz, formerly a Democrat, was appointed U.S. attorney by President Jimmy Carter. When Ronald

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Reagan was elected, Volz thought it would help him win reappointment if he were a Republican, so he quietly re-registered. According to Republicans directly involved, Volz's reappointment was reviewed by the GOP patronage committee in Louisiana and in Washington by a White House-level committee on political appointments. Volz admits he talked with former Republican governor Dave Treen and Republican representative Bob Livingston about reappointment, but denies he made a deal involving switching parties, prosecuting Edwards, or anything else. On the day Edwards was indicted, however, Livingston—himself a former prosecutor—went on New Orleans television, live from Washington, demanding that the governor resign immediately. So much for the presumption of innocence.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

As may be expected, Edwin Edwards takes a different view. The party switch "shows the political nature of the man." Volz did it to "enlist the support of the Republican hierarchy in Louisiana to support him for renomination." The investigation and prosecution were politically inspired: "These Republican U.S. attorneys would never investigate a Republican governor on similar charges." Edwards also charges that Volz acted to advance his own prospects for a federal judgeship: "A life of ease and comfort on the federal bench, I'm sure that was in his mind."

Before the trial began, Volz rejoined, "I don't think I need to cut another notch in my gun." But a big case like this surely could make an impression, and in the political watering holes of New Orleans, the wagering was that Volz's judgeship rested on the Edwards outcome.

On the docket the case was identified as *Criminal 85-78, USA v. Edwin Edwards and Others*. Outside the courthouse, mingling with the press and onlookers, were vendors selling souvenir T-shirts and phonograph records with this ditty: "Citizens and voters I'm in trouble that's clear. For helping my friends, I've been dubbed a racketeer."

Inside, the conspiracy charged by the government was a scheme to obtain and sell lucrative state-sanctioned permits to build hospitals and nursing homes. Allegedly, a low-level health-care official, John Landry, had been bribed during the Treen administration; he was promised a promotion and a raise of $42.50 a week if he would help from inside. All eight co-defendants netted a total of ten million dollars in the deal; Edwards's portion was $1.9 million. The prosecution charged that Edwards did very little work for his share, that as once and future governor he was peddling his influence, and when he no longer could legally take a direct cut, his brother Marion stood in as Edwin's "bagman." The conspiracy, it was said, began when Edwards was out of office, but followed him back into office in 1984. To establish a motive for the conspiracy, the prosecution introduced FBI reports of Edwards's gambling losses of over two million dollars. Headlines blared out stories of a casino representative arriving at the Governor's Mansion in Baton Rouge to carry away nearly $800,000 in cash, stuffed into suitcases and envelopes, to pay off the losses.

The case was brought under the Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), a law aimed at mob-style organized crime. Prosecutors love RICO because it carries stiff penalties (20 years) and permits the government to go after the "ill-gotten gains." "Under RICO, the days of making a killing then doing two years at a minimum-security facility are over," says Oliver Houck, professor of law at Tulane and a former prosecutor. "You don't get to use the money, and that's true for your mansion, your yacht, and your country club membership. They go."

Edwards's defense was that everything he did was as private citizen Edwards, not as Governor Edwards, that he had every right to make as much money as he could while he was not in office. Edwards never claimed he did much actual work for his fees, saying during the grand jury proceedings, "I never bill by the hour, I bill by results. Lesser lawyers bill by the hour." On the witness stand,

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Edwards described his role in the venture as that of "door opener."

The jury in this case was low-to-middle income, mostly blue-collar, evenly split between men and women, with five blacks. Not a coat-and-tie crowd. On the one hand, speculators surmised, this was an Edwards jury because these were the kinds of folks who voted for him. On the other hand, it was a group that would have trouble earning $20,000 a year, and might not take kindly to their governor grabbing millions for doing very little work, nor to his high-rolling habit at the craps table.

Friends and associates of John Volz said this was the biggest case of his career, that he would have it tuned like a fine watch. In the courtroom, though, the watch began to tick unevenly, and observers began to wonder how good Volz's case really was.

Edwards countered the gambling evidence with a representative from Harrah's Casino who testified that on the junkets in question the governor emerged a winner. Edwards testified that his total liabilities indicated by the FBI included markers for $100,000 apiece that he signed for family and friends who exceeded their own lines of credit at the casino.

JOHN LANDRY, testifying for the government with immunity, admitted he had lied before the grand jury and could not recall who had offered him the bribe. Landry's supervisor, Dr. Sandra Robinson, a black pediatrician who heads the Department of Health and Human Resources, Louisiana's largest state agency, testified that she had promoted Landry entirely on her own, without political pressure. In closing arguments, the prosecution belittled Dr. Robinson as a woman so confused she could not sort out what was going on in her own department. It was a tactic of monumental stupidity; women and blacks on the jury stiffened and looked away.

There was one moment of fine irony when the Prosecutor and the Governor faced each other during cross-examination. Part of Edwards's governing creed, publicly stated, is that he helps those who help him, but, he said from the witness stand, "I'll help my enemies, too, if they ask. I even helped you once, Mr. Volz, when you asked." Taken aback slightly, Volz recovered, "Yes, but it didn't do any good."

The puzzled courtroom later learned that Republican Volz had called Democrat Edwards to ask if the governor would smooth his way with Louisiana's two Democratic U.S. senators, should Volz be awarded a federal judgeship. Seeing a painless way to get an aggressive prosecutor kicked upstairs, Edwards obliged. But it didn't work. The man who got the appointment, secure for life and smugly observing the exchange, was Judge Marcel Livaudais II.

John Volz's fine watch stopped completely on December 9, the day Judge Livaudais threw out all charges against three of the alleged co-conspirators, along with a damaging obstruction of justice charge against another. The U.S. attorney's crack prosecution team had listed the wrong name in the indictment.

IN THE END, the Edwards hung jury was produced by a single thumb turned down. The government had convinced one juror of 12, Clifford West, 31, black, a union electrician presently unemployed, who told his colleagues in the jury room he thought the governor was guilty and nothing would change his mind. From the rear of the government van that shuttled the jurors between the courthouse and their hotel, West signaled his thumbs-down to the television cameras.

Ironically, because he was both black and a union member, and because Edwards had won over 90 percent of both groups in the last election, the defense team had listed West as a probable government strike during jury selection. Because there was more than one union member on the jury panel, AFL-CIO state president Victor Bussie spent several trial days seated tall, bald, and prominently on the defense side of the courtroom. This clever gesture may have cost Edwards complete acquittal, because though West does need a job, he also has filed a racial discrimination suit against his local union.

Edwards's chief counsel was Nashville attorney Jim Neal, former Watergate prosecutor, defender of Ford in the Pinto case and of Elvis Presley's doctor. After the trial, Neal said Volz had barely enough evidence to take the case to the grand jury, and he congratulated the U.S. attorney: "He got more out of less than any prosecutor I have ever seen."

After the verdict, Volz told reporters on the courthouse steps that he would probably ask for a new trial, but would wait awhile to decide. He also took a backhanded swipe at the entire state of Louisiana, saying, "I don't think we didn't prove our case, I think they didn't want to convict these people. The question is, Are the citizens of Louisiana ready to change this type of thing? And the answer, apparently, is no." Coming from a man who has done well in life persuading Louisiana juries to end public corruption, that statement was particularly graceless.

But as John Volz well knows, in highly publicized prosecutions of public officials, there is a public presumption of guilt. A politician can win a case inside the courtroom and lose it outside. The New Orleans *Times-Picayune* released a post-trial poll showing that 39 percent of the citizens of Louisiana still consider Edwin Edwards guilty, 31 percent said not guilty, and the rest had no opinion.

Asked how much the investigation and trial had cost, Republican U.S. Attorney Volz said he had no idea (estimators close to the prosecutor's office say three million dollars would be a good guess), but "it was worth every penny." Democrat Governor Edwards, who has three years remaining on his term and must attempt to govern the state bearing the presumption of guilt, announced a special session of the legislature for early January to deal with the state's faltering economy. Characteristically, Edwards will ask for a statewide lottery or casino gambling for New Orleans, or both. □

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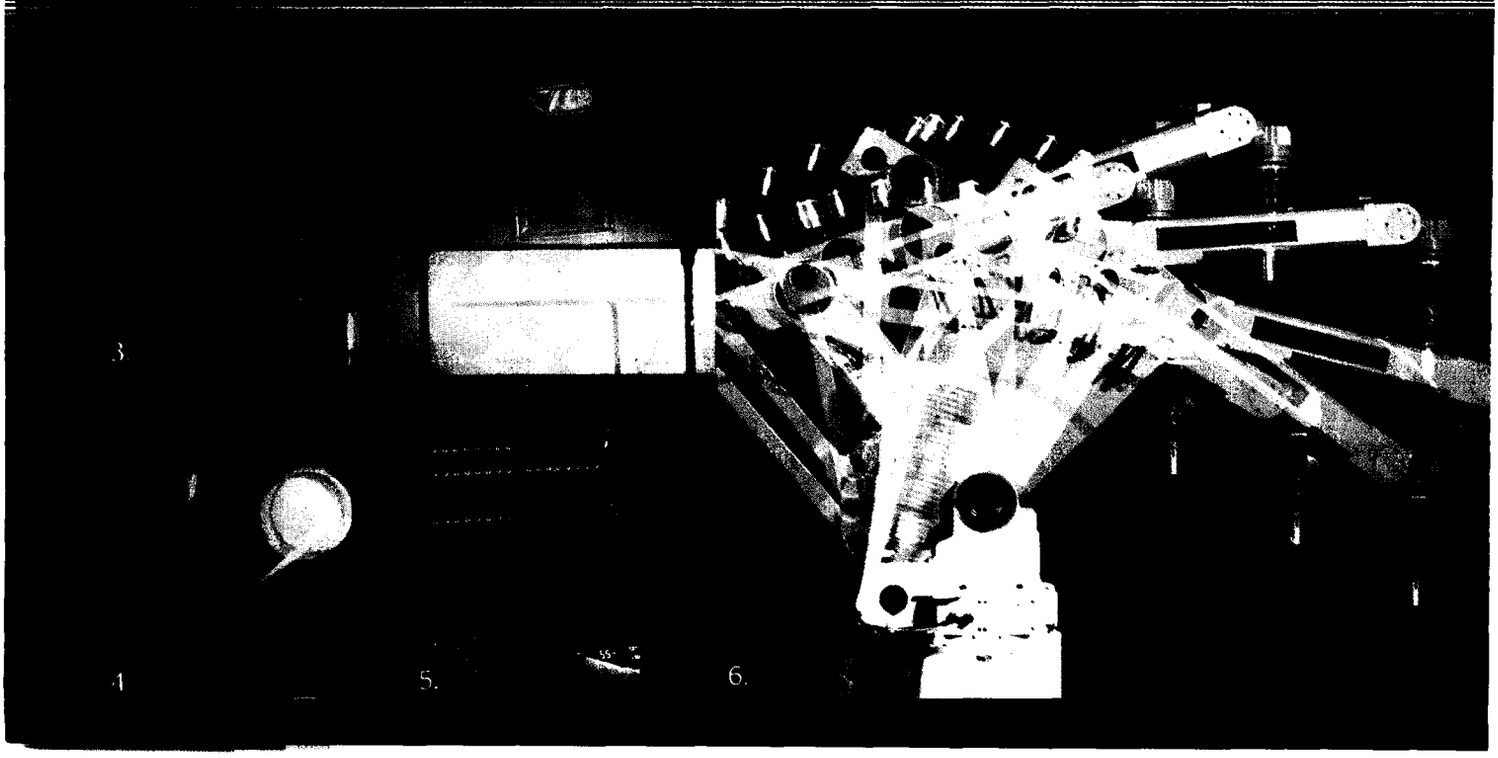

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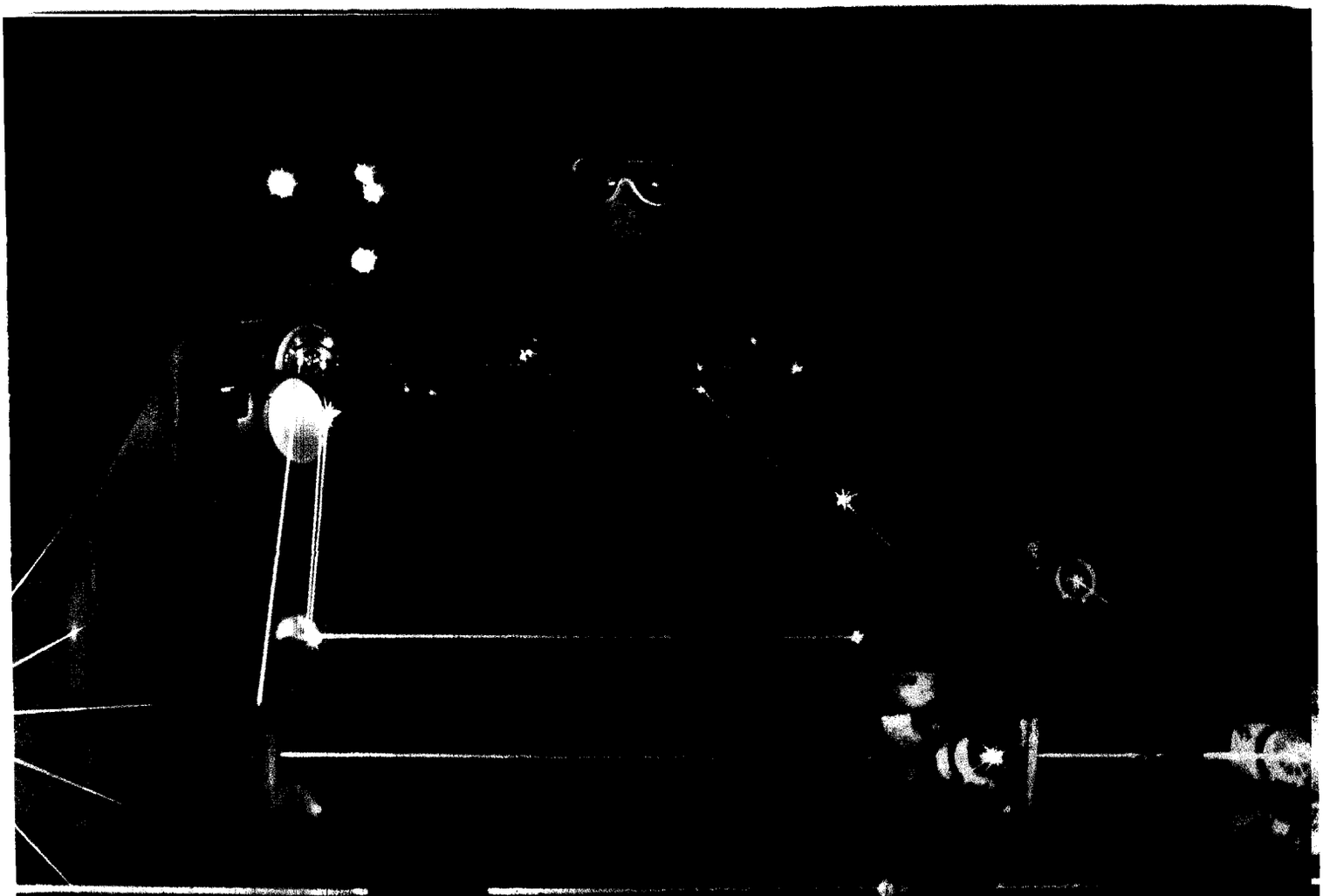

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Sign of the Times

The history of black actors in Hollywood films has few surprises: it closely reflects current social attitudes. (By "Hollywood" I mean white-controlled films made anywhere in America; the black film industry, which began making features in 1918, is a quite different subject.) Before sound, black actors were cast as "Toms, coons, mulattoes, mammies, and bucks," as Donald Bogle says in his book of that title. Leading black roles, when they occurred, were played by white actors in blackface. For example, in 1927 Warner Bros. made a picture about two black comics in World War I. They were called Ham and Eggs: the picture was *Ham and Eggs at the Front*. The leads were played by two white men blacked up. The script was by Darryl Zanuck, and the female lead was played by Myrna Loy in blackface.

The Color Purple
(Warner Bros.)

The arrival of sound, which provided the chance to use black music, inevitably altered matters somewhat. As early as 1929, two all-black features were made in Hollywood: *Hearts of Dixie*, directed by the now-forgotten Paul Sloane, and *Hallelujah*, directed by the well-remembered King Vidor, who had already done *The Big Parade* and *The Crowd*. From time to time through the next three decades, pictures with black casts—or nearly all-black—came along once in a while; of course, in the last dozen or so years, they have appeared much more frequently.

Now—and it's a landmark—the most successful director-producer in the world history of film has directed and produced a (virtually) all-black film. The juncture of Steven Spielberg and a black subject reflects current American society as black employment in film has always done, but in this case there's an extra dimension. Spielberg has become a golden eminence not just through talent, which he certainly has, but also, perhaps especially, because he is not the least bit shrewd. He is open and self-gratifying. It's easy to imagine the story conferences at which a lot of latter-day black films were cooked up to cash in on what's happening. It's impossible to imagine anything like that with Spielberg. He makes us feel that, as producer or producer-director, he makes films that he himself wants to see. He apparently operates on the assumption that if he wants to see it, the international film public will also want it, an assumption that is now pretty well validated. So it's significant that he wanted to see, thus wanted to make, a film of Alice Walker's novel *The Color Purple*. If Spielberg is a congenital vicar for an immense public, which he seems to be, then an immense public is ready for a black film that tells some unpleasant facts about black American life.

Walker's novel won a Pulitzer Prize and an American Book Award and has been read by millions. (This is no guarantee of film success; the past is strewn with failed film transcriptions of best sellers.) Except for one salient episode, *The Color Purple* is not about black-white relations: it is about blacks. Specifically, it is about the mistreatment, the abuse, of black women by black men. As literature, Walker's book seems to me to have much the same relation to, say, Jean Toomer's *Cane* that *The Exorcist* has to *The Turn of the Screw*. Walker's novel is often affecting, but at a somewhat elemental level. The book is composed of letters, most of them written in so-called black English that in itself evokes pathos. Celie, the heroine, addresses letters to God. (Later there are more literate and much less moving letters from her sister who escapes from rural Georgia to become a missionary in Africa.) "Dear God," begins the book, "I am fourteen years old." Then come two crossed-out words. Then: "I have always been a good girl. Maybe you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me." That salutation, those crossed-out words, the bewildered appeal launch the book at once on its accessible way.

God gives Celie plenty of signs of what is happening to her, most of them oppressive, but Celie endures, with taciturn courage. A sketch for those who don't know the book: the story follows this Georgia farm girl from 1909 to 1931. Her stepfather gives her two babies, then takes them away. She doesn't know where they are. Then he hands her over for marriage to a widower who had come to ask for Celie's sister. Her husband tyrannizes her and taunts her with his passion for a band vocalist. Celie, continually jeered at as ugly, is first told otherwise by the singer. Sex to Celie has merely meant submission to men. It is a woman, this singer, who introduces her to sexual pleasure. Celie matures, achieves independence, even-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Out of Africa. Meryl Streep is splendid as Isak Dinesen in the Kenyan years early in the century before she became Isak Dinesen. David Watkin's camera captures place and period superbly. The pace slackens toward the end, but Streep's creation of a wonderful woman triumphs. (Reviewed 1/20/86)

Ran. Japanese for "chaos." Akira Kurosawa's latest and last work, based on King Lear, is set in 16th-century Japan. It misses tragedy, but it is marvelously powerful through Kurosawa's mastery of armies in motion and battle as agon. (1/6&13/86)

Shoah. A monument to memory, rather than a documentary. Claude Lanzmann interviewed witnesses of the Final Solution—survivors, bystanders, participants—shot 350 hours of film in 14 countries, and wove the result into nine-and-a-half hours of experience that supplements what we have read about the Holocaust with ineradicable presence. (Note: every foot of this film was made after 1976; none of it is archival.) (10/28/85)

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tually returns to her husband, and at last is reunited with her missionary sister, who also brings Celie's children home.

The book might have been written for Spielberg. Walker and he are both genuine, both skilled practitioners of popular art. It seems inevitable that this should be the book to switch him, temporarily anyway, from space sagas and kid stories. About the only serious adjustment that Spielberg and his screenwriter, Menno Meyjes, had to make in the book was to diminish the lesbian element, which is only implied.

Allen Daviau has photographed the film in colors that are the visual equivalent of Quincy Jones's lush music: Spielberg apparently feels that the flooding music and color transcend artifice because of the authenticity they adorn. Moreover, Spielberg keeps the camera below eye-level a good deal of the time, often near floor-level, looking upward as if to assert that he feels the story is epic.

For Celie, Spielberg, with his usual good instincts, chose Whoopi Goldberg. Her stage name is some sort of joke that she is now stuck with: her abilities deserve better. She is a solo performer of sketches she herself creates. Her Broadway appearance last year demonstrated that her performing talent is better than her writing. Goldberg's future in film is a wide-open question, I'd say, unless there is a place for a female Eddie Murphy; but as Celie, she is perfect.

Danny Glover, the widower who weds her reluctantly, goes from strength to strength as an actor. Up to now, he has played sympathetic roles—notably, the vagrant in *Places in the Heart*. Here he plays a brute who mellows with the years. Glover makes the younger man both terrifying and understandable, and makes the mellowing as credible as anyone could do.

Two women are outstanding. Oprah Winfrey is a plump proud woman who pays grievously for her pride. Margaret Avery is Shug (short for Sugar), the singer who bewitches Celie's husband but whose love turns out to be the liberation of Celie's spirit. Avery is worldly wise, yet warm and lovely.

The film travels a bit errantly and sluggishly toward the happy ending we know it must have, whether or not we've read the book, but Spielberg's convictions carry it through: his conviction that this is now the moment for a mass-appeal film on these aspects of black life and his conviction about happy endings. Clearly he believes that happy endings are integral to film, that they are what film is for. These two convictions, of instance and of principle, sustain this picture.

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Donald N. McCloskey

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

The Shepard Enigma

A Lie of the Mind is Sam Shepard's most ambitious play to date, the closest he has come to entering the mainstream of American drama. Directed by the playwright in association with professional producers, it has been mounted at the Promenade Theatre with a strong cast.

A Lie of the Mind
by Sam Shepard

Like David Rabe's *Hurly-Burly*, which also played that off-Broadway theater with box-office actors, it stands a good chance of moving later to a Broadway house. Thus Shepard seems to be following the pattern of all serious American dramatists since O'Neill—beginning with a small but passionate coterie of devoted admirers, and then achieving popular support and media recognition. In Shepard's case, this recognition has been enhanced, and complicated, by his celebrity as a movie actor, which has exacerbated the tension between his public and private careers. A similar tension was partly responsible for that neglect suffered by most reputable American playwrights after their greatest success (followed perhaps by a revival of interest when the playwright died or reached some venerable birthday). Clifford Odets got smothered by Hollywood; Arthur Miller ran out of usable material; Tennessee Williams lost control of his form; William Inge turned to increasingly hysterical plots; Edward Albee sacrificed his absurdist power for mythical

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drawing-room comedies modeled on T. S. Eliot. On the other hand, O'Neill, with whom Shepard is most frequently compared, wrote his greatest plays years after Broadway had abandoned him.

For that reason, any cautionary remarks about Shepard's future are premature, though I must admit I found *A Lie of the Mind* disappointing—a big canvas on which the colors run in smeared, sometimes slipshod fashion. True, Shepard's play writing has never been neat, but then it has never been very accessible either. What is strange for Shepard enthusiasts is how closely this one resembles a play by Lanford Wilson or Tennessee Williams. Ever since *Curse of the Starving Class*, Shepard has been moving away from extravagant characters, dream actions, and hallucinatory riffs into a more domestic style. With *Buried Child*, arguably his finest work, he managed to make the family play a structure for subterranean probes into the American nightmare. Now, however, those relationships between violent and sensitive brothers, loony mothers and children, fathers and alienated sons, husbands and estranged wives, have increasingly moved to the center of his plays, while whatever was fantastic and demonic has gone to the fringes. *A Lie of the Mind* goes delightfully haywire in the last of its three long acts, but for most of its four-hour length the action and the characters are relatively recognizable, even endearing eccentrics.

In short, Shepard is beginning to domesticate himself as a writer—ironically at the very moment when, as a movie actor, he is being catapulted into legend as the iconic lonely Westerner. Composing more and more out of his actual as opposed to his dream experience, Shepard is moving inexorably toward the heart of American realism, where audiences have the opportunity to identify him as a family member like themselves—son, brother, lover, husband. This has advantages: greater clarity, concentration, and recognition. It also has disadvantages, in that Shepard is now displaying what he has in common with the spectator rather than what the spectator unwittingly shares with him. Another disadvantage is that as Shepard's life gets increasingly familiar from interviews, his work seems to get increasingly biographical—and confined. The brothers in *A Lie of the Mind* remind us of the ones in *True West*; the husband and wife recall the brother and sister in *Fool for Love*. The California family comes from *Curse of the Starving Class*, the Montana family from *Buried Child*. Worse, one finds oneself speculating about more personal links: whether the enmity between the dead father and his son is based on Shepard's own published filial feelings, whether the hero's jealousy over his actress wife has any bearing on his relationship with Jessica Lange, whether the character's brain-damaged dialogue has been influenced by that of his close friend Joseph Chaikin, a recent stroke victim. One is tempted, in short, to confuse fiction with reality, imaginative creation with biographical gossip.

A Lie of the Mind begins with a frenzied telephone call from Jake to his brother Frankie, saying that he has killed his actress wife, Beth. Objecting to the way she identified with her roles, Jake imagined that, Method-like, she was sleeping with her leading man, and beat her about the head. Beth, however, is alive, though the assault has damaged her brain; hospitalized and visited by her own brother, Mike, she can speak only nonsense syllables ("I'm above my feet. . . . How high me? How high up?"). Jake is having his problems too; he refuses to believe Beth has survived and suffers catatonic fits. His mom, a menopausal vamp, tries to cure him by feeding him cream of broccoli soup, but he is in a fever of jealousy over a past affair he imagines between his brother and his wife.

Meanwhile, Beth has moved from a California hospital to her Montana home, where her father spends his days hunting venison. When Frankie arrives to try to reconcile Beth to Jake, her father, Baylor, mistaking him for a deer, shoots him in the leg. ("In my prime, you'd have been dead meat, son.") Beth's family, particularly Mike, is primed for vengeance. Beth, alternating between moments of clarity in which she confesses her love for Jake and periods when she thinks they cut out her brain, dresses up like a hooker and tries to seduce the wounded Frankie, while Mike gleefully hauls in the hind end of a deer and drops the carcass on the living-room floor.

Back in California, Jake is preoccupied with the ashes of his own father, an alcoholic Air Force officer who had abandoned the family. In a long revelation scene, Jake confesses his responsibility for the death of his father, whom he led from bar to bar, then encouraged to run down the middle of the highway. When Jake finally goes to Montana to find Beth, Mike trusses him like a horse, putting an American flag in his mouth for a bit. (Baylor is mighty upset by this desecration of the "flag of our nation.") While Baylor and his dotty wife carefully fold the flag, Jake announces his love for Beth—"I love you more than this earth. . . . Everything lied—you—you're true. I love you more than life." Then to prove it, he delivers her to his brother Frankie and leaves in the snow.

This is essentially the plot of the play, though there are dozens of other scenes, many irrelevant, including one in which Jake's mom leaves home with her daughter and, in order to avoid packing, sets fire to the house. (In Montana, Beth's mother thinks she sees a fire in the snow.) It may seem odd to describe such idiosyncratic characters and bizarre behavior as normal or domestic. Yet the eccentricities, while often amusing, sometimes seem willed, like the studied gothic in Beth Henley or Tennessee Williams, and at the heart of this work is a rather conventional, even somewhat banal, love story. "I love you more than this earth" is not a line one would ever expect to find in a Shepard play.

Nor would one expect to find such crude symbolism as the flag business at the end. Even his title lacks the customary, instinctual Shepard resonance. What *A Lie of the Mind* could use is a really exacting editor, one who might have persuaded the playwright to pare away irrelevancies and obesities from his rather bloated text, while encouraging him to examine more closely its themes and situations. This is a director's function; and much as I admire some of Shepard's work with the actors, I think it was a mistake for him to stage his own play. The setting, for example, apart from being crude and unsuggestive, leaves the central area of the stage virtually unused, with most of the scenes being staged in the two rooms on the sides.

I did not see Harvey Keitel play the part of Jake; perhaps to counteract his image as a woman-beater (following a similar role in *Hurly-Burly*), he was away with his own wife as she gave birth to a child. Instead, his understudy, Bill Raymond, performed Jake, script in hand, in a display of guts and talent that drew cheers, though it made one attend more to the achievement

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than the play. People have a tendency to miscast Amanda Plummer, and she seemed to me again miscast as Beth, too spiritual and stentorian to capture the steamy voluptuousness of the character. As Frankie, Aidan Quinn adds to his growing stature as an intelligent performer. Will Patton is a strong, vaguely simian Mike, roaring out the fury of an unsatisfied revenger; and James Gammon brings a hoarse crude authority to the deerstalker, Baylor, whether having his bare feet rubbed with an ointment made to soften leather boots or giving his wife her first kiss in 20 years.

But the acting honors of the evening belong to the two moms, Geraldine Page as Jake's mother and Ann Wedgeworth as Beth's. Her talent and control increasing with her age, Miss Page is a fearless and accomplished actress. She brings a bleary dissociation to the role—her belly swollen into a pot, bobby socks on her feet, a flower in her ear, whining like a fire siren—that tells us more about Jake's genetic disorders than Shepard's writing. As for Miss Wedgeworth, equally amnesiac about the facts of her past—demure, wan, trembling on the edge of hysteria—she emerges somehow as the most delicate member of the family, and the sanest too, for all her flakiness ("Please don't scream in this house; this house is very *old*").

But ultimately, despite the felicities of the acting and the writing, this play wears you down rather than works you up. The dialogue is a little too declarative, the plotting a little too undisciplined, the characters a little too unforgettable, to persuade you that the motor energies come out of inspiration rather than will. Critics are saying that Shepard's double role as playwright and movie actor is providing that missing link in American culture between high and popular art. I wonder. It must be very hard to write plays when people are staring at your hands to see if your nails are dirty. How does one perform the private act of creation under the blinding glare of publicity? How do you base your work on experience without making it a subject of gossip or speculation? How can Shepard find the freedom to separate himself as a writer from the role determined for him as a movie star? Perhaps those Pirandellian questions might form the subject of his next play.

What feminism has learned at the office.

STRATEGIES OF CORPORATE WOMEN

BY BARBARA EHRENREICH

SOME of us are old enough to recall when the stereotype of a "liberated woman" was a disheveled radical, notoriously braless, and usually hoarse from denouncing the twin evils of capitalism and patriarchy. Today the stereotype is more likely to be a tidy executive who carries an attaché case and is skilled in discussing market shares and leveraged buy-outs. In fact, thanks in no small part to the anger of the earlier, radical feminists, women have gained a real toehold in the corporate world: about 30 percent of managerial employees are women, as are 40 percent of the current MBA graduates. We have come a long way, as the expression goes, though clearly not in the same direction we set out on.

The influx of women into the corporate world has generated its own small industry of advice and inspiration. Magazines like *Savvy* and *Working Woman* offer tips on everything from sex to software, plus the occasional instructive tale about a woman who rises effortlessly from managing a boutique to being the CEO of a multinational corporation. Scores of books published since the mid-1970s have told the aspiring managerial woman what to wear, how to flatter superiors, and when necessary, fire subordinates. Even old-fashioned radicals like myself, for whom "CD" still means civil disobedience rather than an eight percent interest rate, can expect to receive a volume of second-class mail inviting them to join their corporate sisters at a "networking brunch" or to share the privileges available to the female frequent flier.

BUT FOR all the attention lavished on them, all the six-figure promotion possibilities and tiny perks once known only to the men in gray flannel, there is a malaise in the world of the corporate woman. The continuing boom in the advice industry is in itself an indication of some kind of trouble. To take an example from a related field, there would not be a book published almost weekly on how to run a corporation along newly discovered oriental principles if American business knew how to hold its own against the international competition. Similarly, if women were confident about their role in the corporate world, I do not think they would pay to be told how to comport themselves in such minute detail. ("Enter the bar with a briefcase or some files. . . . Hold your head high, with a pleasant expression on your face. . . . After you have ordered your drink, shuffle through a paper or two, to further establish yourself [as a businesswoman]," advises *Letitia Baldridge's Complete Guide*.)

Nor, if women were not still nervous newcomers, would there be a market for so much overtly conflicting advice: how to be more impersonal and masculine (*The Right Moves*) or more nurturing and intuitive (*Feminine Leadership*); how to assemble the standard skirted suited uniform (de rigueur until approximately 1982) or move beyond it for the softness and individuality of a dress; how to conquer stress or how to transform it into drive; how to repress the least hint of sexuality, or alternatively, how to "focus the increase in energy that derives from sexual excitement so that you are more productive on the job" (*Corporate Romance*). When we find so much contradictory advice, we must assume that much of it is not working.

There is a more direct sign of trouble. A small but significant number of women are deciding not to have it all after all, and are dropping out of the corporate world to apply their management skills to kitchen decor and baby care. Not surprisingly, these retro women have been providing a feast for a certain "I told you so" style of journalism; hardly a month goes by without a story about another couple that decided to make do on his $75,000 a year while she joins the other mommies in the play-

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ground. But the trend is real. The editors of the big business-oriented women's magazines are worried about it. So is Liz Roman Gallese, the former *Wall St. Journal* reporter who interviewed the alumnae of Harvard Business School, class of '75, to write *Women Like Us*.

The women Gallese interviewed are not, for the most part, actual dropouts, but they are not doing as well as might have been expected for the first cohort of women to wield the talismanic Harvard MBA. Certainly they are not doing as well as their male contemporaries, and the gap widens with every year since graduation. Nor do they seem to be a very happy or likable group. Suzanne, the most successful of them, is contemptuous of women who have family obligations. Phoebe, who is perhaps the brightest, has an almost pathological impulse to dominate others. Maureen does not seem to like her infant daughter. Of the 82 women surveyed, 35 had been in therapy since graduation; four had been married to violently abusive men; three had suffered from anorexia or bulemia; and two had become Christian fundamentalists. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the high incidence of personal misery, two-fifths of the group were "ambivalent or frankly not ambitious for their careers."

WHAT IS happening to our corporate women? The obvious antifeminist answer, that biology is incompatible with business success, is not borne out by Gallese's study. Women with children were no less likely to be ambitious and do well than more mobile, single women (although in 1982, when the interviews were carried out, very few of the women had husbands or children). But the obvious feminist answer—that women are being discouraged or driven out by sexism—does gain considerable support from *Women Like Us*. Many of the women from the class of '75 report having been snubbed, insulted, or passed over for promotions by their male co-workers. Under these circumstances, even the most determined feminist would begin to suffer from what Dr. Herbert J. Freudenberger and Gail North call "business burnout." For non-feminists—or, more precisely, post-feminists—like Gallese and her informants, sexism must be all the more wounding for being so invisible and nameless. What you cannot name, except as apparently random incidents of "discrimination," you cannot hope to do much about.

Gallese suggests another problem, potentially far harder to eradicate than any form of discrimination. There may be a poor fit between the impersonal, bureaucratic culture of the corporation and what is, whether as a result of hormones or history, the female personality. The exception that seems to prove the rule is Suzanne, who is the most successful of the alumnae and who is also a monster of detachment from her fellow human beings. In contrast, Gallese observes that men who rise to the top are often thoroughly dull and "ordinary"—as men go—but perhaps ideally suited to a work world in which interpersonal attachments are shallow and all attention must focus on the famed bottom line.

Women Like Us by Liz Roman Gallese (Morrow, 252 pp., $15.95)

The Right Moves: Succeeding in a Man's World Without a Harvard MBA by Charlene Mitchell and Thomas Burdick (Macmillan, 242 pp., $18.95)

Feminine Leadership: Or How to Succeed in Business Without Being One of the Boys by Marilyn Loden (Times Books, 306 pp., $16.95)

Women's Burnout: How to Spot It, How to Reverse It, and How to Prevent It by Dr. Herbert J. Freudenberger and Gail North (Doubleday, 244 pp., $14.95)

Corporate Romance: How to Avoid It, Live Through It, or Make It Work for You by Leslie Aldridge Westoff (Times Books, 246 pp., $16.95)

The Corporate Couple: Living the Corporate Game by Peggy J. Berry (Franklin Watts, 296 pp., $16.95)

Letitia Baldridge's Complete Guide to Executive Manners (Rawson Associates, 519 pp., $22.95)

To judge from the advice books, however, the corporate culture is not as impersonal, in a stern Weberian sense, as we have been led to believe. For example, *The Right Moves*, which is a good representative of the "how to be more like the boys" genre of books for corporate women, tells us to "eliminate the notion that the people with whom you work are your friends"—sound advice for anyone who aspires to the bureaucratic personality. But it also insists that it is necessary to cultivate the "illusion of friendship," lest co-workers find you "aloof and arrogant." You must, in other words, dissemble in order to effect the kind of personality—artificially warm but never actually friendly—that suits the corporate culture.

Now, in a task-oriented, meritocratic organization—or, let us just say, a thoroughly capitalist organization dedicated to the maximization of profit—it should not be necessary to cultivate "illusions" of any kind. It should be enough just to get the job done. But as *The Right Moves* explains, and the stories in *Women Like Us* illustrate, it is never enough just to get the job done; if it were, far more women would no doubt be at the top. You have to impress people, win them over, and in general project an aura of success far more potent than any actual accomplishment. The problem may not be that women lack the capacity for businesslike detachment, but that, as women, they can never entirely fit into the boyish, glad-handed corporate culture so well described three decades ago in *The Lonely Crowd*.

THERE MAY also be a deeper, more existential, reason for the corporate woman's malaise. It is impossible to sample the advice literature without beginning to wonder what, after all, is the point of all this striving. Why not be content to stop at $40,000 or $50,000 a year, some stock options, and an IRA? Perhaps the most striking thing about the literature for and about the corporate woman is how little it has to say about the purposes, other than personal advancement, of the corporate "game." Not one among the Harvard graduates or the anonymous women quoted in the advice books ever voices a transcendent commitment to, say, producing a better widget. And if that is too much to expect from postindustrial corporate America, we might at least hope for some lofty organizational goals—to make X Corp. the biggest damn conglomerate in the Western world, or some such. But no one seems to have a vast and guiding vision of the corporate life, much less a Gilderesque belief in the moral purposefulness of capitalism itself. Instead, we find successful corporate women asking, "Why am I doing what I'm doing? What's the point here?" or confiding bleakly that "something's missing."

In fact, from the occasional glimpses we get, the actual content of an executive's daily labors can be shockingly

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trivial. Consider Phoebe's moment of glory at Harvard Business School. The class had been confronted with a real-life corporate problem to solve. Recognizing the difficulty of getting catsup out of a bottle, should Smucker and Co. start selling catsup out of a wide-mouthed container suitable for inserting a spoon into? No, said Phoebe, taking the floor for a lengthy disquisition, because people like the challenge of pounding catsup out of the bottle; a more accessible catsup would never sell. Now, I am not surprised that this was the right answer, but I am surprised that it was greeted with such apparent awe and amazement by a professor and a roomful of smart young students. Maybe for a corporate man the catsup problem is a daunting intellectual challenge. But a woman must ask herself: Is *this* what we left the kitchen for?

Many years ago, when America was more innocent but everything else was pretty much the same, Paul Goodman wrote, "There is nearly 'full employment' . . . but there get to be fewer jobs that are necessary or unquestionably useful; that require energy and draw on some of one's best capacities; and that can be done keeping one's honor and dignity." Goodman, a utopian socialist, had unusually strict criteria for what counted as useful enough to be a "man's work," but he spoke for a generation of men who were beginning to question, in less radical ways, the corporate work world described by William H. Whyte, David Riesman, Alan Harrington, and others. Most of the alienated white-collar men of the 1950s withdrew into drink or early coronaries, but a few turned to Zen or jazz, and thousands of their sons and daughters eventually joined with Goodman to help create the anticorporate and, indeed, anti-careerist counterculture of the 1960s. It was the counterculture, as much as anything else, that nourished the feminist movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which is where our story began.

In the early years, feminism was torn between radical and assimilationist tendencies. In fact, our first sense of division was between the "bourgeois" feminists who wanted to scale the occupational hierarchy created by men, and the radical feminists who wanted to level it. Assimilation won out, as it probably must among any economically disadvantaged group. Networks replaced consciousness-raising groups; Michael Korda became a more valuable guide to action than Shulamith Firestone. The old radical, anarchistic vision was replaced by the vague hope (well articulated in *Feminine Leadership*) that, in the process of assimilating, women would somehow "humanize" the cold and ruthless world of men. Today, of course, there are still radical feminists, but the only capitalist institution they seem bent on destroying is the local adult bookstore.

As feminism loses its critical edge, it becomes, ironically, less capable of interpreting the experience of its pioneer assimilationists, the new corporate women. Contemporary mainstream feminism can understand their malaise insofar as it is caused by sexist obstacles, but has no way of addressing the sad emptiness of "success" itself. Even the well-worn term "alienation," as applied to human labor, rings no bells among the corporate feminists I have talked to recently, although most thought it an arresting notion. So we are in more or less the same epistemological situation Betty Friedan found herself in describing the misery—and, yes, alienation—of middle-class housewives in the early 1960s; better words would be forthcoming, but she had to

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refer to "the problem without a name."

Men are just as likely as women to grasp the ultimate pointlessness of the corporate game and the foolishness of many of the players, but only women have a socially acceptable way out. They can go back to the split-level homes and well-appointed nurseries where Friedan first found them. (That is assuming, of course, they can find a well-heeled husband, and they haven't used up all their child-bearing years in the pursuit of a more masculine model of success.) In fact, this may well be a more personally satisfying option than a work life spent contemplating, say, the fluid dynamics of catsup. As Paul Goodman explained, with as much insight as insensitivity, girls didn't have to worry about "growing up absurd" because they had intrinsically meaningful work cut out for them—motherhood and homemaking.

There is no doubt, from the interviews in *Women Like Us* as well as my own anecdotal sources, that some successful women are indeed using babies as a polite excuse for abandoning the rat race. This is too bad from many perspectives, and certainly for the children who will become the sole focus of their mothers' displaced ambitions. The dropouts themselves would do well to take a look at *The Corporate Couple*, which advises executive wives on the classic problems such as: how to adjust to the annual relocation, how to overcome one's jealousy of a husband's svelte and single female co-workers, and how to help a husband survive his own inevitable existential crisis.

Someday, I believe, a brilliantly successful corporate woman will suddenly look down at her desk littered with spread sheets and interoffice memos and exclaim, "Is this really worth my time?" At the very same moment a housewife, casting her eyes around a kitchen befouled by toddlers, will ask herself the identical question. As the corporate woman flees out through the corporate atrium, she will run headlong into a housewife, fleeing into it. The two will talk. And in no time at all they will reunite those two distinctly American strands of radicalism—the utopianism of Goodman and the feminism of Friedan. They may also, if they talk long enough, invent some sweet new notion like equal pay for . . . meaningful work.

The first sex in search of a hearth.

CONFESSIONS OF SENSITIVE MEN

BY ANN HULBERT

ONCE UPON A TIME, according to a medieval tale told in many languages, a squire set out to cure his new wife of the well-known feminine habit of indiscretion. He devised a secret to tell her, swearing her to silence: he claimed impossible, and embarrassing, procreative powers for himself—he had laid two eggs. Worried or impressed or incredulous (the tale doesn't say which), she promptly passed the news along to her friends. As soon as word of his eggs, now five of them, traveled back to him, the squire chastised his wife in public, and she lived discreetly ever after.

This old tale, retold by Patricia Meyer Spacks in her book *Gossip*, has lately been turned on its head. Now men themselves have begun to flout the ancient tight-lipped masculine tradition. Earnest self-revelation has replaced reticence as men eagerly contribute confessions to journalism columns. These forthcoming types, not surprisingly, are a mostly white-collar, paper-pushing crowd. And they are just as garrulous as the girls, to judge by the *New York Times Magazine*'s two-and-a-half-year-old "About Men" column, the weekly counterpart to the nine-year-old "Hers" column; and the numerous articles in *Esquire* on subjects like "Men, Babies, and the Male Clock" and "The Pain of the Divorced Father," as well as its regular "Esquire Journal," written by publisher Phillip Moffitt. Women are eagerly contributing their views as well—in *GQ*'s "All About Adam" column, in *Ms.*'s fall "special issue on men," and in a new book, *Some American Men*, by

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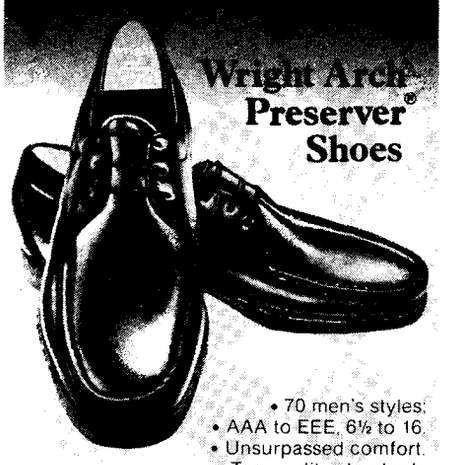

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former *New York Times* correspondent Gloria Emerson. The talkative trend is hailed as a long-awaited breakthrough; at last, as Emerson's book jacket proclaims, silence has been broken by "the voices of men talking, finally talking, about their own lives and of manhood, failure, self-respect, and love."

What men seem most eager to talk about is an untraditional concept of manhood: egg-laying. Men's procreative and nurturing powers lie at the heart of their journalistic self-exposés. (The natural culmination of the genre, *Fathers: A Magazine for Men*, is about to have its debut.) Nowadays those powers are not considered embarrassing or unconventional. They have become a goal to strive for and a source of pride—at a time when women are consolidating their claims to non-procreative skills. Compared to the crusading style of women's early confessions, men are engaged in a more modest, apparently conciliatory enterprise. Women were busy asserting rights, aiming to rally sisters—and rattle men, assuming any would listen. Men are talking earnestly about assuming new duties, and they're acutely aware of women watching, listening, and answering back.

MEN'S confessions fall into roughly two categories. In those that can be lumped together as "independence columns," men pursue male pastimes—mostly clean, outside-the-locker-room stuff. They aren't rebelling, *Playboy*-style; they're trying innocently to relax among their own ilk. In their "commitment columns," they write about relationships, aiming to display their sensitivity. Neither project proves to be straightforward for men, who are caught up short in each case by challenges posed by post-feminist women. On the one hand, women disrupt the boyish idylls by raising the subject of uncommitted sex, an independent pastime men aren't eager to gab about in mixed company. On the other hand, women seem to them to have an edge in coping with the new wide range of commitments. Shortchanged by nature, men can't hope to compete with the superwomen who are getting ahead at work and yet are also pulled, as ever, to personal fulfillment at home.

On independent "girls-keep-out" subjects, the columnists generally emphasize the innocuous, inept, childish quality of all their male bonding—our "eternally immature, pre-acculturation urges," as Walter Goodman, a *New York Times* reporter, called them in his "About Men" column. They're writing about playing, not about working, and their topics are a post-feminist blend of old-style men's themes (sports, hunting, cars, bars, machines, cards) with a sprinkling of more voguish interests (gardening, fashion). Whether it's lounging with a Bud in hand or extolling "The Joy of Bringing up Buds," as one gardener does, the essential message is similar: these pockets of play beyond office and home are where a boyish sense of ease springs eternal—inner grace, not outward agility. As Ira Berkow, another *Times* reporter, put it in describing the pleasures of middle-aged lumbering after a basketball, the lure is "The Dreaming. The soaring—well, in a fashion soaring."

Men are right to figure women won't find any of this terribly threatening. But they're not quite prepared to see women turn around and threaten them on their own turf. Far from being taken aback by this men-only stuff, women condescendingly suggest that it's pretty tame. Here's one "All About Adam" entry on the subject of "Boys' Night Out":

> For all the staring and sozzled bravado, a funny thing happens if one of the guys actually tries to approach a woman. His pals suddenly turn into eighth graders. They blush, giggle, elbow one another and generally create such a junior-high locker-room scene that the bold one backs off in queasy mortification.

Clearly women have a particular activity on their minds when they think about men out on their own—one that men avoid in their "independence" columns. That is sex—the uncommitted variety that recalls adolescent appetite, not boyish innocence. As Peter Nelson explained in *Ms.*'s special issue on men: "we still address the subject in a kind of detached, clinical way, sprinkled with humorous anecdotes to diffuse the tension. Sometimes feelings and doubts come up, but usually no deep true confessions—not the way we're sure women talk all the time." In a number of "All About Adam" columns, women do launch right into the subject of bodies and lusts, brazenly sizing up male physiques and techniques. A hard-boiled lesson comes from one seasoned woman who talks straight to the philandering husbands. "I don't believe it's my responsibility to play confessor," she tells them, declaring that these are affairs of the flesh, not occasions for spilling the heart. That view may be titillating, but it's also intimidating, for the flesh can be fickle, as Peter Nelson pointed out in his article: "Women can't know what it's like to have an organ that is half-voluntary, half-involuntary." Performance anxiety isn't new, but once women feel free to be aggressive too, the "independence" realm is no longer quite the escape it was meant to be.

IF THE OLD STAG ground isn't a real retreat anymore, has the realm of commitment become more welcoming? That is the question at the core of the confessional genre, for it's in the commitment columns that men, and women, earnestly explore the new male nurturing potential. Their discoveries are filled with awkward phrasing and ambivalent feeling. Men's meditations on their personal commitments are largely a poor imitation of the less than elevated female model. The trouble, as women are quick to point out, seems to be that when men start talking about emotional ties, they leave reality behind and turn self-dramatizingly romantic.

Those emotional bonds are to fathers, to women (wives and others, though rarely mothers), and to children, and none of them is simple. Feminists might be surprised to find what staunch allies they have in denouncing patriarchal structures: men easily keep pace with—even outstrip—women in their complaints about the ordeals of life under the shadow of the father figure. This is the verdict of an "About Men" column called "Fathers and Sons": "the remarkable thing is not that the project can sometimes be negotiated gracefully, but that it can ever be survived at all."

As for men's relations with women and children, cartoonists have been quick to capture the characteristic hypocrisy, and women elaborate in their columns. Lynda Barry, whose cartoon series "Modern Romance" regularly appears in *Esquire*, lampoons the rise of what one writer has caustically labeled "Caring Sharing Relating." Men are usually the sillier of her psychobabbly pairs, still discussing the Challenges of Commitment long after the women have started to yawn. In *Ms.*, Lorrie Moore, who established her expertise on young disillusioned women in her recent collection of stories, *Self Help*, pokes fun at the ex-boyfriend who wants to "be friends." In "All About

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Adam" columns some women lament men's succumbing to the spell of "wimp wonderment"; others charge that the new sensitivity is only skin deep—despite the new cuddliness, the old "I'm allergic to intimacy" line is still a standard ploy.

The fashionable fathers get only slightly less caustic treatment. Garry Trudeau spent a week last spring ridiculing the new dedicated dad. (*Esquire* columnist Bob Greene's *Good Morning, Merry Sunshine*, a treacly chronicle of life with his baby daughter, was probably his model, but Trudeau could have been satirizing any number of "About Men" testimonials.) The comic strip followed columnist Rick's diary entries, which were full of reverent reflections on his special ritual with baby Jeffrey: kissing the kid after his wife had fed, burped, bathed, and changed him. "You change one dirty diaper," his wife remarked, "and it's a literary event."

BUT beneath the easily mocked superficiality of men's earnestness about their nurturing role, men themselves aim to score a few points on the subject. When men write about the joint burden of personal *and* professional commitments, they take their turn to suggest that the other sex lacks realism. Women, the men imply, are being too idealistic when they elevate well-rounded stardom at home and at work as a universal, androgynous aim. Where women have written plenty about meeting the challenges of both work and family, they haven't said much about how men might hope to manage in both realms. In fact, some of the columnists suggest, superwomen tend to be a little heartless as they bustle about with a baby under one arm, a briefcase under the other.

The theme of virtually all of Phillip Moffitt's "Esquire Journals" is that dilemma of setting "priorities" between his professional and personal life. His is the voice of the wistful post-feminist workaholic: "I . . . made a professional commitment that simply took over my life, leaving me no time for personal activity." He sees his dilemma but, like several superachiever male friends he writes about in "The Time of Your Life," he is "unable to break an old pattern" of total absorption in his fast-paced work. No matter how much he exhorts himself to "learn [to] . . . order your priorities and act accordingly," he can't.

To compensate, Moffitt spends many of his columns praising women for learning just that elusive lesson. This might seem liberated of him if it weren't for the patronizing, slightly resentful tone that creeps in. In "Dancing and Dazzling," he glowingly recounts "a lunchtime conversation with a woman coming of age." Though he tells us she's 35—roughly his age—he sounds, unwittingly, like a superior at least twice as old. He listens indulgently as she tells how she has brilliantly navigated obstacles to become "firmly established in a profession, one with a certain amount of adventure and glamour, happily functioning in her three-year-old marriage, and talking about wanting to get pregnant."

But when it's his turn to give an accounting of his skewed life, he's rendered speechless by his predicament, which dwarfs hers: "How could I explain, to borrow a line from a poem, 'that I did not have a secret chart to the heart of this or any other matter.' " Lucky women are "finding within themselves the so-called 'male' characteristics of aggression, competition, and independence, while being able to keep the 'female-associated' characteristics of emotion and expression." Unlucky men lack "the self-awareness and flexibility that she and so many other women have." Certainly the self-awareness Moffitt touts ("I am the sort who does think about the why of things, maybe because, for me, it is too painful not to") doesn't help him live "according to life's natural rhythms." His life (and even his metaphors) are out of sync: "For unlike the flower, we do not easily embrace nature's clock, and more often than not, we forget to tend our lives in order that they too should bloom."

In an article in *Ms.*, David Osborne discusses the question of "priorities" from the opposite, stay-at-home, perspective. While his wife works 100 hours a week as a gynecologist and obstetrician, he juggles his writing career and 20-month-old Nick. Osborne doesn't have the luxury of Moffitt's muddles, and he is very clearheaded about the tensions of his predicament. Constantly scrambling, he manages to squeeze in his writing, thus preserving his sense of identity (and, as he points out, satisfying modern women's desire for a helper at home who isn't a wimp in the world). But his flexibility is no match for nature; in the end, his wife's claim to assert her identity as mother prevails: "Ah, the double bind," he writes.

> You're in charge one day, playing mother and father all wrapped into one, depended upon to feed him and clothe him and change him and bathe him and rock him and meet his every need. And the next day you're a third wheel, because Mom is around. You are expected to put in long hours, but to pretend in public that you don't, for fear of undercutting your wife's sense of self-worth as a mother.

A lot of men evidently feel that women have gotten the better deal under the post-feminist peace, with nature calling them ineluctably to personal fulfillment while society beckons them to profes-

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sional satisfactions. There is, moreover, a final male handicap: men are, theoretically at least, called to war. That civic duty, which women are spared, looms anomalously large in the men's confessional genre, considering that combat is hardly a salient or representative experience of contemporary American men, particularly those in this mostly well-educated, professional sample. But for Gloria Emerson, a reporter in Vietnam, the ordeal of war overshadows all. Her supposed portrait of "some American men" is really a meandering manifesto about men's victimization by war. In the magazines, where war memories occupy an odd limbo—an unplayful adjunct of the "independence" category, or an impersonal corner of the "commitment" columns—the emphasis on combat amounts to a bow to an abstract notion of war as the one remaining, and essential, masculine preserve.

The memories are the occasion for an ambivalent mixture of pre-feminist male pride and post-feminist angst. Emerson, along with some men, bemoans the burden of a destructive ethos that toughens and silences men. But other men sound exhilarated as they write about brushes with real battle. These columnists cling to their war memories as a counterweight to a subsequent confusion of roles and rules. World War II, Nelson Bryant writes in an "About Men" column called "The Sorcery of War," was "the only time when the enemy and the course to defeat him were clearly defined. We had yet to mount an assault on the enemy within." Writing about the far less clear-cut war in Vietnam, *New York Times* reporter Michael Norman still echoes that sigh for a certain simplicity: "no one I know comes of age in [that] kind of company anymore."

GIVEN the new mixed company, the real question that now confronts men as they spill their hearts on paper—on subjects ranging from war to "An Aisle of Tears," about a daughter's wedding—is just how distinctive their voices are, or can be. Above all, men are taking their turn to show they speak "in a different voice," as they're supposed to according to the post-feminist wisdom that celebrates fundamental sexual differences. Yet simultaneously they are declaring their commitment to the kind of confiding that has been a feminine specialty. The balance is hard to strike, since what has traditionally been most "different" about men's talk is precisely that it steers clear of personal subjects. The squire settled things by briefly confiding to his wife in private, and then issuing denials in public—embarrassing her, and seeing to it that silence henceforth reigned at home. Now men in private are still thought reticent compared to women, but in public they bare their souls. "Like a lot of men," an *Esquire* editor explains, writing about the author of "The Pain of the Divorced Father," "he'll answer intimate questions when asked, but doesn't openly offer his pain to neighbors, friends, or even family." Instead he offers his pain to thousands of magazine readers, embarrassing everybody and nobody.

CROWDS AND POWER

Public Philosopher: Selected Letters of Walter Lippmann edited by John Morton Blum

(Ticknor & Fields, 704 pp., $29.95)

"The heart," Pascal wrote, "has reasons the mind does not understand." Everybody agrees. But suppose the reasons of the heart are bad reasons, even barbarous ones. What if they explode in wars of annihilation, set race against race, and regularly produce economic catastrophe? Can the mind then formulate reasons that sway the heart? "Have we the right to believe that human reason can uncover the mechanism of unreason, and so in the end master it?"

Walter Lippmann posed that question in a letter to Judge Learned Hand, and he spent his life looking for an answer. The quest joined his early views of politics with his later thoughts on ethics, public opinion, and international affairs. It elevated newspaper articles above the level of "mere journalism," and it unified Lippmann's work and life. It finds appropriate salience in this absorbing selection of letters, edited with a perceptive introduction by John Morton Blum of Yale, and it explains much that has seemed quirky or nasty in Lippmann's behavior.

A convenient point of entry into the mind of Lippmann is the now forgotten *Human Nature in Politics*, published by Graham Wallas in 1908. Lippmann met Wallas, a professor at the London School of Economics, at Harvard in 1910. They developed what Blum calls a "long and close relation." Wallas inscribed a copy of *Human Nature* to Lippmann and dedicated his next book, *The Great Society*, to him. Of his own first book, *A Preface to Politics*, Lippmann wrote Wallas that it was "in no small part . . . aimed at popularizing your *Human Nature*. . . ." Lippmann went to stay with the Wallas family in Britain after World War I broke out. Fifteen of the letters in this collection—more than he wrote to almost any other correspondent—are to Wallas. In one he called Wallas "the greatest teacher I have ever known"; in another he says that he is reading *Human Nature* for the tenth time.

"The study of politics is just now in a curiously unsatisfactory position," Wallas wrote in the opening sentence of that book. "From Plato to Bentham and Mill," writers had based political science expressly on an articulated view of human nature. Subsequently the rationality of man was simply assumed. Typical was Macauley's famous dictum: "When we see the actions of a man, we know with certainty what he thinks his interest to be." But Wallas himself fought against the disposition to "exaggerate the intellectuality of mankind." He scorned *homo sapiens* as the dominant figure on the political scene. Instead of mind, he put at the core of modern politics the dark caverns of the psyche. "Most of the political opinions of most men," he wrote in a striking prefiguration of much modern work, "are the result not of reasoning tested by experience, but of unconscious or half-conscious inference."

From the unconscious to its prophet was only a half step. A Harvard classmate, Alfred Booth Kuttner, who began

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psychoanalysis for severe depression, undertook to translate *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Lippmann spent the summer of 1912 with Kuttner. "I have been reading a great deal in the Freudian psychology," he wrote Wallas in July 1912. In October he reports to Wallas: "I have been studying [Freudian psychology] with a great deal of enthusiasm for several months now, and I feel about it as men might have felt about *The Origin of Species*." Thirty years later he recalled reading Kuttner's translation. "Serious young men," Lippmann remembered in a letter in 1942, "took Freud quite seriously."

FREUD and Wallas fixed Lippmann's intellectual destiny. They gave him access to a central truth—that the basic factor in modern history is the crowd in action, the mass passion that collects around leaders presuming to speak for racial communities, nations, and vast empires. That idea, acquired as a young man, was systematically brought to bear by Lippmann on the great problems that arose during the changing seasons of a turbulent century; it is the thread that runs through all his work.

Political order was his first concern, and very nearly his last. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (followed by Ronald Steel in his masterful biography) saw Lippmann as "an intellectual," driven by "contra-cynical" instincts, "impelled always to redress the balance against the dominating suppositions of the day—sometimes after he himself had given these suppositions their most trenchant statement." By focusing on Lippmann and "the problem of order," John Morton Blum identifies and (rightly, in my view) stresses the more constant values. Lippmann had been a socialist at college. A year after graduation in 1910 he took a job as secretary to the Socialist mayor of Schenectady, but six months later he resigned. "We are," he wrote of the administration he served, "a ridiculous spectacle . . . I have all the sensations of a man trying to tie a string around a sunbeam." The Schenectady experience immediately preceded *Preface to Politics*. And that book, in turn, announced Lippmann's lifelong mistrust of mass politics. The corruption of Tammany was a true expression of "human need." Reform politics availed nothing. "No moral judgment can declare the value of life." The best that could be achieved was a sublimation of animal passions. "Instead of tabooing our impulses, we must direct them."

But the redirection of mass passion was not a task for standpatters—the "routineers" in Lippmann's term. Exorcising the demons required, rather, statesmanship. This was the office of leadership, as exemplified by Theodore Roosevelt, "the first president who shared a social vision." Sixty years later, reminiscing about the presidents he had known personally, Lippmann said that "there was one President who was lovable—Teddy Roosevelt—and I loved him." Nor did he remain faithful only to this "first crush," as Steel called T.R. An almost straight line runs between Lippmann's early philosophy of politics and his later friendships with great men, between his *Preface to Politics* and his last book, *The Public Philosophy*, which was published in 1955. Its subject was "the malady of the democratic states." Health turned to sickness during World War I when governments had to "democratize" to mobilize popular energies. The result was "a functional derangement of the relationship between the mass of people and the government." Competent authorities, as a result, lost the "power to decide." This power could be restored only by a strong executive, and Lippmann extolled "authority . . . derived from tradition . . . consecration, veneration . . . prestige . . . hierarchy."

STILL, having lived through Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini, Lippmann understood well how popular frenzy imparted to sheer malignancy the illusion of godliness. He appreciated the modern dangers of power and sought a check to modern demagoguery. He thought he had found it in natural law—"a common conception of law and order which possesses a universal validity." Blum points out—as have Schlesinger, Steel, and many others—that Lippmann's logic was "uncharacteristically reductionist, its conclusions inherent in its premises." But finding no persuasive answer to the grave problem of political order does not make the searcher inconsistent. It only deepens the desperate quality of the condition.

On one feature of the desperate condition, Lippmann became the acknowledged expert. Public opinion, he wrote in the work of that name, was a "counterfeit of reality." It consisted of "pictures in the head" or "stereotypes" subject to gross manipulation during times of stress. It was "no longer possible . . . to believe in the original dogma of democracy: that the knowledge needed for the management of human affairs comes up spontaneously from the human heart." Instead there was required a class of specialists able to "prepare the facts for the men of action." Blum calls *Public Opinion* Lippmann's "most enduring and completely original book." Schlesinger and Steel agree. But its argument hardly represents a freakish position of the moment. In fact the message of *Public Opinion* derives as a virtually perfect continuum from *Preface to Politics*. It feeds directly into *The Public Philosophy*.

Neither was Lippmann's stance in foreign policy marked by the chops and changes imagined by some. Mistrusting the gusts of popular feeling and their expression in jingoism and withdrawal, Lippmann was from first to last a *realpolitiker*. He tried to define an enduring national interest, and to match com-

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mitments with resources. He favored American entry into World War I because he believed that German victory would menace what he called "the Atlantic community." He opposed the Versailles treaty because, having studied Central Europe after the prostration of the Russian, Turkish, and Austrian empires, he saw (rightly again) that the Wilsonian vision lacked the force to contain Germany. He entertained misgivings regarding Cold War policies in Europe mainly because they exposed Germany to manipulation by Russia. He never kidded himself that the United States had the stomach for sustained intervention in Eastern Europe.

Latin America he considered within this country's sphere of influence. From Mexico in Wilson's time through Lyndon Johnson's intervention in the Dominican Republic, he had but one concern about Yankee Imperialism—to make it efficacious. Similarly, an American presence in the western Pacific was equally part of his worldview. But he drew the line at the Asian mainland. He supported appeasement of the Japanese in Manchuria during the 1930s. He broke with Acheson and Truman because they allowed themselves, after writing off Korea, to be panicked into a campaign on the mainland bound to engage China (as it did). He opposed the American effort in Vietnam, mainly on the grounds that Johnson, and later Nixon, were in a war they "could not win." But he was never a peacenik. To hail his last years, and the bitter controversy with Johnson, as a final acceptance of a truth, as an ultimate condemnation of American interventionism, is a travesty.

IT WOULD be an act of irony, and highly un-Lippmannesque, to ignore the interplay between Lippmann's work and his life. Blum reports that "Lippmann was not given to soul-searching in his letters, and there are no letters of that kind" either in this selection or in the full correspondence (estimated at 20,000 letters). The impersonal note is striking, even staggering. It announces a man with a dirty secret: Lippmann, as Steel showed, was ashamed of his Jewish heritage. He felt toward his parents a cold indifference and distanced himself from his roots at an early age—first through romantic aestheticism, then in the socialist fling. To Steel's careful documentation, this collection adds a particularly telling note. In a letter to a first love, Lucy Elsas, Lippmann speaks of life at the parental board:

> Religion comes up: can we tell them that the Temple Emanu-el exhibition is a piece of blatant hypocrisy? that its mechanical service, its bromidic interpretation, its drawing room atmosphere of gentility, its underlying snobbishness, which makes it an exclusive organization for the wealthy, strangle all the religion that is in us? Can we tell our friends [that a Harvard classmate], when a visitor in New York on Yom Kippur, fled from the temple to St. Patrick's Cathedral to find there a religious atmosphere? Can we tell them that a religion, which doesn't make life richer, fuller, more splendid than it now is, which doesn't touch life at every point, thus creating a harmony between the soul of man and the stars in heaven, is no religion at all.

But Judaism was not all that Lippmann repudiated. He showed scant sympathy for any minorities. He supported quotas at Harvard, never raised his voice against the Nazi persecution of Jews in Europe, and reacted coolly to Zionism. He found abstruse constitutional reasons for withholding support from blacks and the campaign for civil rights. He warned Al Smith not to contest the exclusion of Asian immigrants. He favored the internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II. Twenty-five years later he wrote of his position:

> My reason was a belief that in a state of war hysteria after Pearl Harbor, Japanese, who are easily identified by mobs, would not be safe. As there were continual threats, and rumors of, Japanese submarines landing on the Pacific coast, I felt that very great trouble might result. There is no doubt that the rights of citizens were abridged by the measure, but I felt then, and I still do, that the temper of the times made the measure justifiable. . . .

In place of religious faith, Lippmann offered, in *Preface to Morals*, a kind of romantic stoicism. He set himself up as disinterested and detached, a mature man "who would take the world as it comes, and within himself remain quite unperturbed." In fact, as Steel has shown, that portrait of the mature man was Lippmann's impersonal epitaph on the failure of his first marriage. Nor could he deal any better with other messy, emotional problems. The letters show him repeatedly repulsing friends of a more ardent nature. He wrote John Reed that he "had acted like a cad." When Felix Frankfurter urged him to support Theodore Roosevelt in 1916, Lippmann wrote back: "I do not agree with you a bit about T.R. Your attempt to read into all his words all the glowing aspiration of your heart simply will not work."

IN the end Lippmann felt comfortable mainly with the eminent. The letters produced here go to the likes of Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Colonel House, Louis Brandeis, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Herbert Hoover, Franklin Roosevelt, Dean Acheson, George Marshall, John Foster Dulles, and Arthur Vandeburg—to list only a very random sampling. There is almost no correspondence with ordinary people. Lippmann has been censured for the company he kept. There is something to the complaint, elaborated at great length by Steel, that access to the great and important was too dear to Lippmann's heart. "Put not thy trust in Princes," was Lippmann's advice to younger journalists; but that of course is precisely what he did.

But this cannot fairly be the last word, still less the only word, on this matter. Paying attention to the "process" and to the "players," though arduous, may finally yield rich insights into government and politics. From such a study—which should not be confused with snobbery, or a crude elitism—there derives a feel for structure, a sense of what it means practically when a major event occurs or a leading office changes hands. Lippmann cared about the process and the players; through long and careful study, he developed mastery over a great range of national and international business. He stayed close to those in power not, as the critics suppose, for merely the vain satisfaction of intimacy with the high and mighty (though such satisfaction there was). The subject matter itself drew him. By his work in the vineyards of journalism, he did—far more than many of those who toil in the archives—the labor of the Lord.

A deep inner logic, moreover, bound social habit to point of view. Having figured from the first how much emotion shaped principle, and how little conscious thought determined action, Lippmann resisted the peril of drawing logical conclusions from weak data. He did not encumber the play of his mind with surveys remote from reality. He preferred to focus on concrete events that took place in identifiable places at fixed times. He studied presidents and

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ministers who tried to cope with crowds. But he knew from the beginning the evanescent nature of mass opinion, and the dubious quality of the pollster's "science." In 1967 George Gallup wrote Lippmann that public opinion would allow Johnson to settle the Vietnam War. Lippmann wrote back that in Johnson's case personal pride would forbid what public opinion would permit. He was right.

Besides righting a balance, these selected letters confer a bonus. Lippmann poured forth golden prose. He took on the most difficult subjects, and enriched understanding with vivid metaphor and a treasure trove of allusion. He moved swiftly over the empty space of things and seized the rich detail. Age does not wither, nor custom stale, even his period pieces. Lippmann's writing, as Holmes wrote to Laski, "is like flypaper to me; if I touch it, I am stuck till I finish it."

JOSEPH KRAFT

Joseph Kraft is a syndicated columnist.

SHATTERED IDYLL

Luisa Domic
by George Dennison

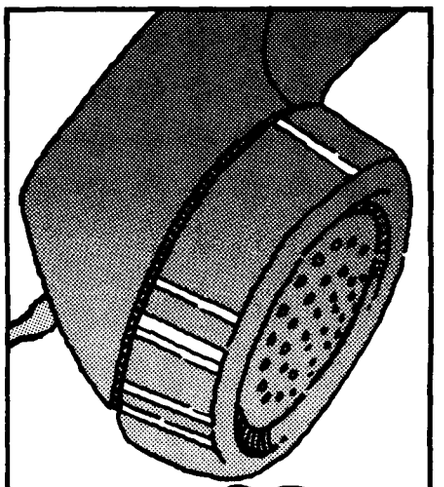
(Harper & Row, 178 pp., $14.95)

Good fiction begins from the assumption that feelings can be shared, that words can evoke pain and pleasure and pass them between writer and reader. George Dennison's *Luisa Domic* is a paradox, then: it puts faith in our capacity to share and thereby to assuage grief, and it denies that power. The very telling of this story is an admission of failure of a kind; yet the story, in the face of that failure, and with great urgency and poignancy, demands to be told.

The unnamed narrator is a writer in mid-life living a peaceable existence in rural Maine after the more arduous experience of a failed first marriage, a bout in the bruising intellectual world of New York City, and some awkward and lonely years as an ambitious young poet. Father of three appealingly sensitive young children, husband of a wife inevitably less beautiful but far kinder and more comfortable than his first, he describes the satisfactions of family and country life with the almost bemused gratitude of a man who has, against all expectations, arrived a little late but still intact at a safe warm hearth. Now the events of the day concern apple trees and horses, stunning sunsets, and all the happy tumult of a household running at full tilt. There are tensions, both worldly (his wife spends a day at an antinuclear conference) and personal (the writer frets that his work is not receiving from her quite the support that he thinks, or wishes, it deserves). The tensions are muted; they seem only to say, No place is Eden.

But on this sunny Saturday in October comes the proverbial knock at the front door, the whole world begging entry. Dennison has actually announced in his opening sentence very matter-of-factly, "A month after the military coup in Chile we received a phone call from our friend Marshall Berringer, who . . . was escorting a Chilean refugee from New York to Canada. . . . He asked if he could stay with us on the way." The straightforward speaker establishes the tension between idyll and danger before we even recognize it. Terror intrudes, briefly, and then they are alone again, guiltily, sorrowfully to contemplate the vulnerability of family love and community peace.

Before Luisa Domic, the refugee, arrives on their doorstep, however, another friend brings his kit bag of griefs along; they turn out to be a variation before the theme is struck. Harold Ashby, once a well-known composer, has become a very unique sort of Pied Piper. Working with his psychologist-lover, he leads autistic children out of their hermetic world by using the music of his piano to respond to their voices, to make an odd (and only barely describable) kind of structure out of their random cries, their isolation and frustration. Unfortunately, one almost wishes the book carried with it the



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kind of tapes that some new novels contain—music, especially a type never heard before on land or sea like Harold's, is difficult to imagine; we have to take its "genius" on faith. But what we *can* grasp is the passion with which the composer acts out his belief in the value of each small, damaged soul he attempts to haul out of its almost galactic loneliness. It is that contact—its difficulty and its necessity—that obsesses Dennison.

Enter Luisa Domic. On her way to a new home in Canada, she is brought into this family of the good and the innocent after a scarring trauma. No one knows much about her situation—Marshall, her guide, thinks that her family may have been lost in the Chilean coup. But it is clear that she is a charismatically self-possessed, intelligent, even formidable woman, in a state of easily jarred nerves that borders on shock. Only at the end of the book do we hear what atrocities she and her family have suffered at the hands of the junta. With great tact and warmth, the children, the guests, and the narrator try to ease her back into the human family they so unself-consciously represent. Here, too, each life is cradled; the arbitrariness of mass violence is all the more hideous viewed against the profound individuality that can be fostered by so much love.

The family—grace and civilization made local—tries to reach Luisa; they charm and intrigue her. A pianist, she discovers that Harold Ashby is the very composer to whom she and her family of musicians have dedicated themselves with ardor. Perhaps the narrator, his wife, his children, and their friend succeed all too well in representing the self-delighting beauty of an intact family to a woman whose family has just been swallowed up. In any event, try as they may to engage her in the serene possibilities of life, they fail. A minor accident involving one of the children sends Luisa into a panic so alarming that only Harold can soothe her, offering his music therapy like water to the parched. But all it can do is say, "persis-

On The Lee Side

(Cape Breton, Nova Scotia)

Two hours along,
the wind the whole time rising,
I find the site—and seat—for which
it seems I have been looking:

a hip-sized hollow
on the lee side of a low
but broad-boled pine, above a blue-gray
fretted inlet, with a distant view

of a blue-black
icily whitecapped sea. I settle my pack
on the ground beside me. It holds, within,
an apple, a green plum, a handbook

in which I might
pin down precisely what
sort of pine now harbors me, a map
that likewise would set me straight

as to how far,
so far, I've pursued my longings for
the peninsula's roundabout Point,
and some expensive new rain-gear

which, unless that
thunderheaded cloudbank's set
further off, offshore, I'll need before long.
But not yet. So I leave it shut,

and shut my eyes.
Dimly, after a bit, I seem to recognize
the sweep of broken water on rock
but for the most part the sea's

struggles are drowned
beneath big, shattering waves of sound
as the wind floods in among the trees,
making the knotted branches bend

so painfully
backward, the hurt released in high
disjointed creakings. Hands pocketed, eyes
closed wide on darkness, it's as though

my hearing now
sharpens by degrees, until I can follow,
it would almost seem, down every threaded
aerial pathway overhead, the flow

of each succeeding
gust—*rising, and at length retreating,*
through dwindled tons of needles,
and always while retreating bundling

steadily closer
those storm-cloud masses. And what a pleasure,
to hear the wind pitch still higher, to know
the waves swell and fall in answer,

blindly to feel
the whole sky blackening! Given my all-
but-absolute sense of shelter here,
perched on the rim of colossal

upheaval in
perfect safety, I can scarcely come down
hard on that elusive but unavoidable, queer
but predictable inner companion

who asks for nothing
save that his each fresh-formulated craving
meet some delivered satisfaction
that needs no waiting,

who breeds an air
of collected mystery through sheer
indifference to others' welfare, and who's
neatly, snugly sure

just how this splendid
show of weather's to be accounted for:
ingenious exhibitions exclusively intended
to entice and entertain him here.

Brad Leithauser

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tently, 'I am with you, I am with you.' " Luisa, maimed, is beyond healing. The overarching shape of the book is simple: the action that we are privy to takes less than two days.

Within this framework, Dennison strikes many chords and makes some lovely modulations. His first book, the nonfiction *The Lives of Children*, was composed of remarkable observations of children and teaching, and Dennison is still capable of something that goes deeper than description; without abandoning his analytic eye, he writes about children from nearly behind their own eyes. There are many small delights along the way—October on a New England farm is an enviable subject to assign oneself. And the political poet and courier, Marshall, given to us in a quick sketch, is such a recognizable type that he leaps off the page with a dozen names attached: he and his enmity toward Harold-the-composer with his aestheticized, homosexual, psychologically delicate life, which he sets against his own heterosexually robust, politically committed, and self-righteous life of service.

But *Luisa Domic*, if one holds it to the standards of the conventional novel, is deeply flawed. Too often discursive ("Everything he did had the clean, simple lines that come of integrity and generosity") and unnecessarily explicit, it is given to generalizations and speculations that are interesting but not "novelistic." Dennison is a moralist, and the steps of the resolved, however earnest and steady, are never light. There are so many semiabstract flashbacks that it seems, much of the time, that *Luisa Domic* might read more comfortably as a long story. Not that stories or novellas dare get along on summary, but the exigencies of the short form can tolerate quick moves, compression. Possibly it could have been an extended essay; memoir thrives on the tone of barely transformed fact, of lively assertion. More significant, the center of the novel, the relation of the friends and family to Luisa, is utterly passive dramatically. Everything of importance in Luisa's life takes place offstage; it comes to us as hearsay.

But if these would be problems in most novels, are they crucial flaws, in fact, in this one? The essence of Dennison's concern is the remoteness of other people's suffering, the nearly impossible obligation to hear and see what is always out of sight. The awkwardness of its half-digested memoir form might, for all one can tell, be brilliantly feigned like certain pseudo-biographies. In any event, the gravity with which Dennison testifies to his narrator's powerlessness at home on his blessed acres—under a sky that, blue or not, lowers with atomic threat—is a moving one. It may even be the artlessness of *Luisa Domic* that finally makes it effective. Trompe l'oeil? Inadequate novelistic technique? It should not always be an affront to art and taste that a work reads more like a report impelled by urgency than a piece of fiction.

ROSELLEN BROWN

Rosellen Brown's most recent novel is *Civil Wars* (Knopf).

The war is father to the child.

1945

BY RYSZARD KAPUŚCIŃSKI

TODAY, when I go back in memory to those years, I realize, not without a certain surprise, that I remember better the beginning rather than the end of the war. The beginning is clearly fixed for me in time and place. I can easily recreate its image because it has retained all its coloring and emotional intensity. It begins with my suddenly noticing one day, in the clear azure sky of the end of summer (and the sky in September 1939 was marvelously blue, without a single cloud), somewhere very, very high up, 12 glimmering silver points. The entire bright, lofty dome of sky is filled with a hollow, monotonous hum, of a kind I've never heard before. I'm seven years old, I'm standing in a meadow, and staring at the points barely, barely moving across the sky.

Suddenly, nearby, at the edge of the forest, there's a tremendous roar. I hear bombs exploding with an infernal racket. (That these are bombs I will learn later, for at this moment I still don't know that there is such a thing as a bomb, the very concept is foreign to me, a child from the sticks who doesn't yet know about the radio or the movies, doesn't know how to read or write, and also hasn't heard of war and lethal weapons.) I see gigantic fountains of earth spraying upward. I want to run toward this extraordinary spectacle; it astounds and fascinates me. I have no war experiences yet and cannot relate into a single chain of causes and effects these glistening silver airplanes, the roar of the bombs, the plumes of earth flying up to the height of trees, and my imminent death. So I start to run toward the forest, in the direction of the falling and exploding bombs. But a hand grabs me from behind and throws me to the ground. Stay down, I hear my mother's trembling voice, don't move. And I remember that my mother, pressing me to her, is saying something that I don't yet know exists, whose meaning I don't understand, and about which I want to ask her: *that way is death.*

It's night and I'm sleepy, but I'm not allowed to sleep. We have to leave, run away. Where to, I don't know; but I do understand that flight has suddenly become some kind of higher necessity, some new form of life, because everyone is running away. All highways, roads, even country paths, are jammed with wagons, carts, and bicycles, with bundles, suitcases, bags, buckets, with terrified, helplessly wandering people. Some are running away to the east, others to the west, north, south; they run in all directions, circle, fall from exhaustion, sleep for a moment, then, summoning the rest of their strength, begin anew their aimless journey. I must hold my younger sister firmly by the hand. We mustn't get lost, my mother warns; but even without her telling me, I sense that the world has suddenly become dangerous, foreign, and evil,

Ryszard Kapuściński, the Polish journalist and writer, is the author most recently of *Shah of Shahs* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich). Born in 1932, he now lives in Warsaw. This essay was translated by Klara Glowczewski.

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that one must be on one's guard.

I'm walking with my sister beside a wagon. It's a simple ladder wagon, lined with hay, and high up on the hay, on a cotton sheet, lies my grandfather. He cannot move; he is paralyzed. When an air raid begins, the entire patiently trudging and now suddenly panicked throng dives into ditches, burrows into bushes, drops down into the potato fields. Only the wagon on which my grandfather lies remains on the deserted road. He sees the airplanes flying at him, sees them violently dip and take aim at the abandoned wagon, sees the fire of the weapons aboard, hears the roar of the engines passing over his head. When the planes disappear we return to the wagon and my mother wipes my grandfather's perspiring face. Sometimes there are air raids several times a day. After each one, perspiration pours from my grandfather's gaunt, tired face.

WE'RE entering an increasingly gloomy landscape. There's smoke on the horizon. We pass by deserted villages, solitary, burned-out houses. We pass battlefields strewn with abandoned war equipment, bombarded railway stations, overturned cars. It smells of gun powder, and of burning, decomposing meat. Carcasses of horses are everywhere. The horse—a large, defenseless animal—doesn't know how to hide; during a bombardment it stands motionless, waiting for death. There are dead horses at every step, right in the road, by the side in the ditch, further away in the field. They're lying with their legs up in the air, taunting the world with their hooves. I don't see any dead people, for these are buried quickly; only horses, everywhere—black, bay, piebald, chestnut, as if this were not a people's war but a war of horses, as if it were they who waged among themselves a fight to the death, as if they were its only victims.

A hard, freezing winter comes. If people are badly off, they feel more keenly the chill of the environment, the cold is more piercing. For those who live in normal conditions, winter is but another season, a waiting for the spring, but for the poor and the unfortunate, it is a disaster, a catastrophe. And that first winter of the war was truly severe. In our apartment the stoves are cold, and a white, hoary frost covers the walls. There's nothing with which to heat the oven; we cannot buy fuel, and we cannot risk stealing it. For the theft of coal—death; for the theft of wood—death. Human life is now worth next to nothing: a lump of coal, a bit of wood.

WE HAVE nothing to eat. My mother stands for hours at the window; I can see her fixed stare. One can see people staring out into the street from many windows, as if they were counting on something, waiting for something. I roam around the backyards with a gang of boys; it's something between play and searching for something to eat. Sometimes the smell of cooking will come wafting through a door. Then one of my friends, Waldek, sticks his nose into the crack and hurriedly, feverishly, inhales the smell, stroking his stomach as if he were sitting at a richly laden table.

One day we hear that they'll be giving out candy in a store near the marketplace. Immediately we make a line—a long queue of cold and hungry children. It's afternoon, dusk is approaching. We stand in the frost all evening, all night, and the following day. We stand huddled together, hugging one another for warmth. Finally they open the store. But instead of candy each of us receives an empty metal container that once held some fruit drops (what happened to the candy, who took it, I don't know). Weak, numb from the cold, yet at this moment happy, I carry my booty home. It's valuable, because on the inside wall of the can there remains a residue of sugar. My mother heats some water and pours it into the can. We have a hot, sweet drink: our only nourishment in several days.

Then we're on the road again, traveling from Polesie, from our town Pińsk, west, because there, my mother says, in a village near Warsaw, is our father. He was on the front, was captured, escaped, and is now teaching in a small country school. Today, when we who during the war were children reminisce about that time and say "father," or "mother," we forget, because of the gravity of those words, that our mothers were young women and our fathers young men, that they desired each other very much, missed each other very much, wanted to be with each other. My mother, too, was a young woman then, so she sold everything she had in the house, rented a wagon, and we set out in search of my father. We found him by accident. As we were passing through a village called Sierakόw, my mother suddenly cried out to a man crossing the street: Dziudek! It was my father.

From that day on we lived together in a tiny room without light or water. When it grew dark we went to sleep, for there wasn't even a candle. Hunger followed us here from Pińsk. I was constantly looking for something to eat, a crust of bread, a carrot, anything. One day my father, having no other choice, said in class: children, anyone who wants to come to school tomorrow must bring one potato. He didn't know how to trade, didn't know how to do business, he had no salary, so he realized he had only this one option. Some children brought a half, even a quarter. A whole potato was a great treasure.

NEAR MY village is a forest, and in this forest, near a settlement called Palmira, is a clearing. SS men carry out executions there. At first they shoot only at night, and we are awakened by hollow-sounding machine-gun volleys, repeated at even intervals. Later they also do it in daytime. They bring the condemned in covered, dark green trucks, and at the end of the convoy in an open truck rides the firing squad. Those from the squad are always in long coats, as if a long belted coat were an indispensable prop of the murder ritual. When a convoy passes, we, a group of country children, watch, hidden among the roadside bushes. In a moment, behind the cover of trees, something we are forbidden to look at will begin to happen. I can feel my flesh tingling, can feel myself trembling all over. With bated breath we wait for the volleys of gunfire. There they are. Then we hear individual shots. After a time the convoy returns to Warsaw. At the end, in the open truck, ride the SS men from the firing squad, smoking cigarettes and talking.

At night the partisans come. I can see their faces, pressed to the glass, as they appear suddenly at the window. I look at them as they sit at the table, always moved by the same thought: they can die today, they are as if marked by death. Of course we could all perish, but they boldly embrace that possibility, meet it face-on. They came once, as always, at night. It was autumn and raining. They spoke in whispers with my mother. (I hadn't seen my father in a month and wouldn't until the end of the war; he had gone into hiding.) We

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had to get dressed quickly and leave. There was a roundup in the area, and entire villages were being deported to the camps. We were to go to Warsaw, to a designated hideout. It was my first time in a big city, the first time I saw a trolley car, tall, multistoried buildings, rows of large stores. How we later found ourselves in the country again, I don't remember. It was some new village, on the other side of the Vistula. I remember only walking again next to a wagon and hearing the sand of a warm, country road sifting through the wheels' wooden spokes.

THROUGHOUT the entire war I dream of a pair of shoes. *To have shoes*. But how to get them? What did I have to do to have shoes? In the summer I walk barefoot and the soles of my feet are tough as leather. At the beginning of the war my father made me some shoes out of felt, but he's not a shoemaker and they look ill-shaped; besides, I've grown, and they're already too tight. I dream of strong, massive shoes with taps, shoes that make a loud, distinct sound as they strike the pavement. The fashion then was for boots. They were a symbol of masculinity, of strength. I could stare for hours at a pair of good-looking boots. I liked the luster of the leather, I liked to listen to its crunch. But it wasn't just a matter of the beauty of a good pair of shoes, or of comfort. A good strong shoe was a symbol of prestige and power, a symbol of rule. A poor, torn shoe was a sign of degradation, the mark of a man stripped of all dignity, condemned to a subhuman existence. Having a good pair of shoes meant being strong, or simply *being*. But in those years all my dream shoes, which I encountered in the streets and roads, passed me by indifferently. I was left (thinking that I would remain thus forever) in my heavy wooden clogs covered with black tarpaulin, to which I tried, unsuccessfully, with the help of some greasy stuff, to impart a bit of luster.

In 1944 I became an altar boy. My priest was the chaplain of a field hospital. Rows of camouflaged tents stood hidden in a pine forest on the left bank of the Vistula. During the Warsaw uprising, and then later, when the January offensive began, there was feverish, exhausting activity here. From the front, which thundered and smoked nearby, arrived speeding ambulances bringing the wounded, who were often unconscious, piled up in haste and confusion one on top of the other, as if they were sacks of grain (only sacks dripping blood). The orderlies, themselves already half-dead with exhaustion, took out the wounded and laid them on the grass. Then, with a rubber hose, they sprayed them with a strong jet of cold water. Whichever of the wounded began to show signs of life they carried into the tent that housed the operating room. (In front of it, right on the ground, there was each day a fresh heap of amputated arms and legs.) Whoever did not move again they carried to an enormous grave at the back of the hospital. It was there, over that boundless tomb, that I stood for hours on end beside the priest, holding his breviary and aspersorium. I repeated after him the prayer for the dead. "Amen," hundreds of times a day, "Amen," in haste, for somewhere nearby, beyond the forest, the machine of death was working overtime. Until finally, one day, it grew empty and quiet. The rush of ambulances ceased, the tents disappeared (the hospital moved west), and in the forest only crosses remained.

And after? Now, as I write these pages for a book about my war years (a book I'll probably never write), I'm thinking about how its final pages would look, its end, its epilogue. What would it say about the end of the great war? Nothing, I think. I mean nothing definitive, nothing that would close the subject once and for all. Because in a certain but essential sense the war did not end for me in 1945, or even soon thereafter. In many ways something of it endures even today, because for those who live through it, war never, finally, ends. There is an African belief that someone really dies only when the last of those who knew and remembered him die, that someone (or something) ceases to exist when all bearers of memory leave this world. Something like this also happens with war.

Those who live through a war never free themselves from it. It remains within them like some sort of mental hump, a painful growth which even that excellent surgeon, time, will be unable to remove. Listen to a gathering of survivors, around a table, in the evening. It doesn't matter what they start out talking about. There can be a thousand beginnings, but there will be one end: remembering the war. These people,

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even in changed, peacetime circumstances, think in terms of its images, superimpose them on every new reality, with which they can no longer fully identify because that reality is of the present and they are possessed by the past, the constant returning to what they lived through and how they managed to live through it. Their thinking is an obsessively repeated retrospection.

BUT what does it mean to think in wartime images? It means seeing everything as existing in a state of extreme tension, as breathing cruelty and dread. For wartime reality is a world of extreme, Manichaean reduction, which erases all intermediate hues, gentle, warm, and limits everything to a sharp, aggressive counterpoint, to black and white, to the primordial struggle of two forces—good and evil. Nothing else on the battlefield! Only the good, in other words, us, and the bad, meaning everything that stands in our way, which appears to us, and which we lump into the sinister category of evil. The wartime image is saturated with the atmosphere of force, a physical, material, crackling, smoking, frequently erupting force, constantly attacking someone, brutally expressed in every gesture, in the sound of every footstep striking the pavement, of a rifle butt striking a skull. Force is the only criterion of value: only the strong counts, his reason, his shout, his fist—because conflict is resolved not through compromise, but by destroying the opponent. All this takes place in a climate of intensified emotion, exaltation, fury, passion, in which we feel constantly stunned, deafened, and—above all—threatened. We move about in a world full of hateful glances and clenched jaws, full of gestures and voices that terrify.

I thought for a long time that was the only world, that was how it looked, how life looked. For the war years coincided with my childhood and then with the start of maturity, of first understanding, of the birth of consciousness. It seemed to me that war, not peace, was the natural state, even the only state, the only form of existence; that roundups and executions, lies and shouts, contempt and hatred, were part of the natural and immemorial order of things, the content of life, the essence of being. So when the guns suddenly fell silent, when the roar of exploding bombs died away and suddenly there was quiet, I was astonished by it. I didn't know what it meant, what it was. I think that a grown-up, hearing this quiet, could say: hell is over. Finally peace has returned. But I did not remember what peace was. I was too young for that; when the war ended hell was all I knew.

THE YEARS passed, yet the war constantly reminded us of its presence. I lived in a city reduced to ashes, I climbed mountains of rubble, roved through a labyrinth of ruins. The school to which I went had no floors, no windows, no doors; everything had gone up in flames. We had no books, no notebooks. I still had no shoes. War as affliction, as want, as hardship, went on. I still had no home. The return home from the front is the most keenly felt symbol of war's end. *Tutti a casa!* But I could not go home, because what had been my home was now abroad, in another country. Once, after class, we were playing soccer in a nearby field. One of my friends, chasing the ball, ventured into some bushes. There was a terrible bang; we were thrown to the ground. He died from a mine that had been left there. War was still laying traps for us, it refused to surrender. Its victims hobbled along the streets leaning on wooden crutches, waved empty arm sleeves in the wind. Those who survived it, it tormented by night, reminding them of itself in bad dreams.

But war continued for us above all because of the fact that for five years it had shaped our young characters, our psyche, our mentality. It had tried to deform and ruin us, setting the worst examples, compelling us to ignominious behavior, letting loose the basest emotions. "War," wrote in those years the Polish philosopher Boleslaw Miciński, "warps not only the souls of those who try to oppose the invader." Yes, to come out of the war meant to cleanse oneself internally, and above all to cleanse oneself of hatred. But how many really tried? And how many were successful? It was a process, in any event, exhausting and long, which could not take place overnight; the wounds from that conflagration, the psychological and moral wounds, were truly deep.

When there's talk of 1945 . . . I'm irritated by the phrase one often hears in reference to it: the joy of victory. What joy? So many people died. Millions of bodies were buried. Thousands lost arms and legs, lost sight and hearing, lost sanity. Each death is a misfortune. No, the end of every war is sad: yes, we survived, but at what a cost! War is proof that man, as a thinking and feeling being, failed the test, let himself down, was defeated.

When there's talk of 1945 . . . sometime in the summer of that very year, my aunt, who through some miracle survived the Warsaw uprising, brought out to us in the country her son Andrzej, born during the uprising. Today he is a 40-year-old man. When I look at him I think—how long ago all that was! How many generations have already been born who have no idea what war is! But those who survived should bear witness. Bear witness in the name of those who fell by their side, and often in their place. Bear witness about what the camps were, the extermination of the Jews, the destruction of Warsaw and Wroclaw. Is this easy? No. We who survived know how difficult it is to convey the truth about it to those for whom, happily, it is an unfamiliar experience. We know how language fails us, words fail us; how all that, at bottom, cannot be conveyed; how often we feel helpless. (Once someone said to me in Chicago: "They took him to Auschwitz? But why did he agree? Why didn't he get a lawyer?")

Still, despite these difficulties and limitations, of which we must be aware, we should speak. Because talking about all that does not divide but unites, allows us to establish threads of understanding, threads of community. The dead admonish us. They transmitted something important to us, and we must be responsible. To the degree that we are able, we should oppose everything that could again give rise to war, to crime, to catastrophe. Because we who have survived war know how it begins, whence it comes. We know that it comes not only from bombs and rockets. We know that it comes also, perhaps above all, from fanaticism and from pride, from stupidity and from contempt, from ignorance and from hatred. That it feeds on all that, that on that and from that it grows.

When there's talk of 1945 . . . I think of those who were no longer there.

When there's talk of 1945 . . .

Wild passions have gone to sleep
And rash acts;
Love of God, love of man,
Quietly revives in us.

—J.W. Goethe, *Faust*

If only. If only. □

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

The Dictatorship of the Double Standard

EXACTLY WHY President Reagan's affection for international terrorists attracts no discussion is an intriguing question. In 1981 and 1982 Argentine general Roberto Eduardo Viola and his colleagues were warmly welcomed to the United States by Ronald Reagan and his colleagues. Caspar Weinberger called one of this crew "magnificent," and Alexander Haig said they deserved our military aid because they worshiped the same God as we do. At the time these men were reclining on Nancy's divans, a number of them were practicing terrorists. In December 1985 Viola and four others were convicted of establishing and commanding a clandestine system of political violence in Argentina that killed 9,000 people, most of them unarmed civilians, many of them lifelong democrats. Under these circumstances, you might expect that those conservative intellectuals who regularly accuse liberals of being too cozy with terrorists would engage in a little self-examination. You're going to have to be patient. As far as I know, exactly one conservative, William F. Buckley Jr., has admitted that his sympathies for this violent gang were misplaced. Otherwise, the thinkers and writers most eager to face up to the unpleasant lessons of history remain eloquently silent. A brave few have spoken out, proclaiming with marvelous chutzpah that the conviction of the Argentine terrorists is actually a vindication of Reagan's constructive engagement approach. I'm waiting for these astute geopoliticians to recommend that Reagan invite Abu Nidal and Colonel Qaddafi to the White House, shower them with praise, and urge Congress to give them military aid. Presumably the hospitality will help ensure that they too are eventually brought to justice. Jeane Kirkpatrick's memoirs will be well worth the $900,000 her publisher paid for them if she devotes even a single page to honestly recounting her "friendly discussions" with the Argentine assassins.

THIS EPISODE POSES SOME interesting questions for the media too. A *New York Times* headline last week said: "Reagan Accuses Soviet of Aiding Latin Terrorists." Well, we live in a free country with a free press. No Soviet reporter can ask Gorbachev about his support for Latin terrorists. But why can't even one White House reporter ask Reagan if he regrets aiding the most prolific Latin terrorists of the last decade? Journalists committed to understanding U.S. policy on terrorism might try to determine whether Reagan knew in 1981 and 1982 that the Argentines were running a terror operation directed largely against civilians and democrats. If the president and his aides plead ignorance, reporters might probe whether this ignorance was genuine or calculated. They might also investigate the abundant evidence that the Argentines exported to Central America their methods of terrorizing democrats. Nothing prevents reporters from investigating these questions—nothing except the arbitrary power of the administration's double standard on terrorism.

I RAN INTO J. William Medley, author of the syndicated column "Conventional Wisdom," outside a Washington eatery where power brokers often knock heads, and he told me my point was an interesting one, though too extreme. "There is one consistent standard of thinking about the vital issue of double standards," he said: "Some are good and some are bad." His brow furrowed, he quickly moved on to a more pressing question: the 1985 Osric Award. This journalistic prize, named after the toadyish courtier in *Hamlet*, is awarded annually by an anonymous group of Washington journalists for articles that exemplify the Osrician principles of deference, flattery, and self-serving vacuity. Medley wanted to know if I had heard the rumor that he was an early favorite for his July column "Pat Buchanan's Quiet Charm." I assured him that contest judges took many factors into account, including concealment of interest, reliance upon cliché, mutual back-scratching, and unfamiliarity with the English language. He looked reassured and went off to lunch with Richard Darman and Hugh Sidey.

AS I WAS JOGGING at a health club over the holidays, I got to wondering about traditional values. As is frequently the case with traditional values, it was a public display of nudity that raised the issue. I noticed a poster on the wall outside the club's tanning salon. It showed a young woman with nothing on but the ultraviolet lamp. She was smiling and painting her toenails. Was this a small sign of our moral rot? Thirty years ago, when traditional values were respected, no upstanding establishment catering to decent folk would have had such a picture on the wall. With each passing lap (14 to the mile), I was more and more impressed by the girl's combination of frisky litheness and soap-commercial discretion, and more and more puzzled by what it meant. Then I went downstairs and into a darkened room, where I joined a dozen or so women and a few men. A woman put on some rhythmic music, and we spread our legs, stretched, jumped up and down, thrust our pelvises this way and that, all the while checking each other out in the wall-to-wall mirrors and breathing very hard. It was, I assured myself, very good for me. I wanted to ask my neighbor, "Was it good for you too?"—and I choked on the awful thought. Aerobics too are an affront to traditional values.

CONSERVATIVES, NO DOUBT, are pleased that renewed faith in traditional values can be found in even the furthest corners of American society. For example, the *Times* ran an article last week headlined "On the Wild Side: Women in Gangs." It reported that female gang members in New York may cut each other up and mug people, but they are also "motivated by women's traditional desires to find a husband and build a family." Those doleful about feminism's influence on American life should be cheered by the findings of one gang expert: "These kids have remained [insulated] from the feminist thinking that has permeated other strata of society. To these women, the idea of being a man's property is not reprehensible." Indeed, the piece implied that the much-touted conservative political realignment may have yet another dimension. The hitherto unexplored affinities between New York City street gangs and militant antiabortionists were suggested by the article's subtitle: "Violent acts coexist with a desire for family and children."

J.M.

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